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SERMONS OF

HENRY WARD BEECHER

"1813-1887

In Plymouth Church, Brooklyn

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THE DUTY OF LIVING PEACEABLY.

"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."—
ROM. XII: 18.

You will observe that this command is not absolute, but conditional. The popular impression is that a Christian man should be peaceable to the extent that he should never resent nor resist. Whenever Christian men are concerned in the defense of things right; whenever they are the occasion of a great deal of excitement; especially when ministers of the Gospel stir up communities by the qualities which they show, there is a shower of execrations hurled at them. "They ought," it is said, "to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus. They ought to be men of peace. It is a shame for them to be exciting people. It is their business to preach peace."

The true vocation of every Christian is to live peaceably—and that, although the example of the Lord Jesus Christ was pre-eminently one which stirred up trouble wherever he went. No man ever had more enemies than Christ had. No man ever produced greater excitement. And he finally declared that he came, not to send peace, but a sword. His Gospel was to be like light in a bat's cave. It was to be like fire. It was to reveal truth. And the apostles were described as the men who had turned the world upside down.

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither."

There was a fire made about them. And in every age of the world God's foremost servants have proved it impossible to avoid conflict. Confusions have arisen out of their testimony and career. A great deal of passion has burned around about them which they could have quenched by holding their peace and retiring from conflict. On the whole, although it is unquestionably true that one characteristic element in a Christian disposition is peace, and although the benison of God is pronounced upon peacemakers, yet it is unquestionably true that there is a duty of excitement. The

apostle himself, in the passage which we have selected as the foundation of our remarks to-night implies that. "*If it be possible.*" It is impossible, often. In a great many cases it is impossible. "*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you,* live peaceably with all men." You have no right to bring in any disturbance. You are to carry in yourself the feeling of peace, and the desire for peace. You are to be controlled wholly by good will toward men. You are to study the things which make for their happiness and for their pleasure—not their lower happiness nor their pleasure as animals, but the happiness and pleasure of their higher and nobler selves. You are to be almoners of God's bounty in these respects; and in so far as lieth in you, you are to be under the control neither of a quarreling disposition nor of the savage spirit of passion, but you are to be filled full of love to God and to your fellow-men; and you are to feel that the command still comes to you, "*As much as lieth in you, if it be possible, live peaceably with all men.*" But when you have done all that you can, you will find that it is not possible to live peaceably with all men. You will find that contentions and conflicts will come up.

I propose to show, in this discourse, what it is in us that we can control, which is an especial cause of disturbance and strife; and what are some of the things which we cannot control, and which are the causes of great disturbance.

All that disturbance of men's peace which arises from the predominance in us of malign passions, or which springs from our lower nature, we are bound everywhere to restrain. We have no right to be a cause of disturbance by living in that part of our nature which tends continually to interfere with the happiness or welfare of our fellow-men. We have no right to employ offensive or provoking language in our intercourse with our fellow-men. I am speaking now of our intercourse socially and privately. Of course it is so in public. I am speaking to you of a duty which belongs to you in your homes, in your business, in your stores, and in your shops—the duty of so controlling your tongue that your words shall not be provocations. We shall be judged by our words. He that governs his own tongue is a perfect man, and is able also to govern his own body. Words are arrows. They are often poisonous arrows. They have in them oftentimes the fire of hell. They set the soul on fire as if it were kindled of hell.

There are many that have great power of speech who do not feel that the law of God is incumbent upon them in the use which they make of their tongues. A great many men who are just in many things are unjust in speaking. A great many persons

who are cautious in their demeanor abroad, at home and in their own household are heedless, and even rash. There are Christian heads of families who shoot across the table from day to day words which stir up the worst feelings that men can have. Many children are brought up in the midst of provocations and quarrels. Many and many a household has no chimney which carries away the smoke of these conflicts, and the smoke falls down, leaving harm where it rests; and there is a settled condition of unhappiness as the result.

There comes finally a spirit of pride. One will not be overcome by the other, and each sets traps for the other. There are various little points of resistance and retaliation. There are petty ways in which one avenges himself on the other, and shows that he is not to be put down, nor snubbed, nor in any way maltreated.

So it comes to pass that many persons who have good qualities live in disquiet all the time, simply by reason of the ill-advised use of the tongue. It is not controlled. It is a sword that almost never lies at rest in its sheath. It is perpetually flashing here and there, disturbing men. There are some households of which it may be said that all the losses and troubles which come upon them through the providence of God do not equal the disquietude which they suffer on account of the malign use of the tongue at home.

Now, if any man has named the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, his tongue is not to be an instrument of the malign passions. It is to be an instrument of kindness. And I say to every such man, As much as lieth in your tongue, live peaceably with your wife, and your children, and your servants, and your fellow men. If you indulge in unadvised speeches, sharp speeches, querulous speeches, irritating speeches; if by your tongue you keep men at variance with you, you are acting the part of Satan, and not the part of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That which is true of the tongue is also true of the carriage. A man can look speech as well as speak speech. A man may sometimes by silence say more than he does by speaking. A nod of the head, a lifting up of the eyes, a shrug of the shoulder, the whole manner, is as powerful as speech. Do not you know that there is what is called *natural language*? If a man is intensely proud, you can always see that he carries himself proudly. If a man is firm and obstinate, you can see that he stands like a column of marble. If a man is mirthful and humorous, you will see that he is all the time joking and laughing. We have no right to be provoking in our attitudes. We are bound to take care of the natural language of the body. We are bound to carry ourselves so as not to

be vexing. Our whole carriage should be such as to be in the service of love. Those, therefore, who have produced disquiet in the household, or in the social circle, or among laboring men, by an unwise carriage of themselves, or by an unwise use of their tongues, need to give heed to this command, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably."

We may likewise produce great disquiet and opposition by an unconscious, and still more by a conscious and intended, insolent conduct of pride toward men. Pride shows itself inwardly or outwardly. If it works inwardly, it is gracious and noble. It inspires in a man a higher sense of manhood. He may think himself select, excellent, and above others; but it is on account of things which are essentially noble and manly. But where pride in a man works outwardly, he is attempting to put himself above other men, and he carries a perpetual comparison with him which is offensive to them. Frequently the very presence of a man who is filled with a spirit of pride and self-importance is an insult. And what is curious is, that wherever men go, who have in an intense form this constitution of insolent pride, they are almost invariably of the impression that other people insult them. I know of men who every day are insulted somewhere or somehow. Somebody is always insulting them. They are insulted in the street, and in the store, and in the shop. The fact is, a man gets what he carries. He wakes up in others that which is in him. If he is insultingly proud, others will be insultingly proud over against him.

The duty of humility is not simply a duty of the closet. We are bound to humble ourselves before God in such a way that when we go before men, a consciousness of our own supreme importance and a cold and haughty way, shall not carry offense and disturbance. As much as lieth in you, live peaceably and humbly.

Selfishness, or the disposition to sacrifice others' interests to your own, produces disputes and wranglings and contentions; and this, not only in the social circle, but in all forms of business. The ten thousand jealousies and envies which are current in business circles and business transactions arise from the inconsiderate selfishness of men among men. Many men are not liked, and are spoken against, although there is much that is good in them, because they are selfish. In their eagerness to gratify their selfishness, they look out mainly for themselves, and neglect others, and so excite the opposition of their fellow men.

Now, you cannot be a man of peace while you are thinking only of yourself. The apostle says, "Look not every man on his

own things, but every man also on the things of others." "Ye are members one of another." No man has a right to conduct his business without any regard to the interests of other people. You are bound to recognize the principle of brotherhood and of the fellowship of interest. And if you are cold and proud in these respects, you do not fulfill the duty enjoined upon you of living peaceably among men. Selfishness is a disturber of neighborhoods. It is hard to live peaceably with a selfish man. Selfishness is a constant provocation to the worst side of our nature.

I will mention another source of disturbance which perhaps the older members of my congregation do not need to have discussed in their presence, but a discussion of which may be beneficial to the younger members. I mean the untrained disposition of jocosity. I mean all forms of teasing, jesting, irony, sarcasm, wit, which are indulged in at another's expense, and which are not "convenient." I mean that whole class of malign developments of humor which are so much employed in society. The ministration of wit may be benign. It seems to me that in a world where there is so much sorrow and trouble, that is a beneficent constitution which enables a man to see everything in a humorous light. There are some men to whom trouble, when it strikes them, although it gives them pain, takes on some form of humor. There are men who see brightness and scintillations of wit in places where other people see nothing but darkness and gloom. There is in the ministration of wit the power of alleviating care, of driving away distress, of gilding the dark face of things in human life with brighter colors. That man who has the power of brilliancy, of repartee, of suggestion, of mirth and humor; that man who can facilitate the intercourse of life with these elements, is most fortunate. It is very much to be regretted that men do not understand the import of these gifts of God, and that wit is so largely used to gild wickedness and to serve malignity.

The art of teasing may be considered a demoniac art; and society is full of little devils. If a man were to go round in life using his hands as some do their disposition to tease: if he were to shove a man who was coming round the corner into the gutter, and then disappear; if he were to pinch another man and make him bound with pain; if he were to put a needle where another sat on it, and got up a great deal quicker than he sat down; if he were to put a match where another would step on it and set it on fire; if he were to explode a torpedo in another's pocket; if he were perpetually doing such things, he would probably be not simply knocked down, but killed, before he had gone through a very long career.

Men do not act in that way; but there are many who, wherever they go, are always teasing. Ordinarily, this teasing is practiced where the victim has no power of resistance. You shall often see persons pulling little children's hair, saying things that stir up little children's feelings; exposing things that they do not want to have known, in order to see the flush on their cheeks; or creating a laugh at their expense. Saying disagreeable things in a calm and ironical way is inexcusable. There is a teasing which is pleasant, and causes nobody suffering; but teasing for the sake of making other people uncomfortable is fiendish. Any man who finds his happiness in another person's suffering is a little devil. For a devil is one that loves iniquity in any measure. Anybody who, in the family, or shop, or store, or street, finds pleasure in making other people unhappy, is devilish. There are many persons that have great warm hearts and kind dispositions, who do many things in the name of wit and humor which do not comport with their warmth of heart and kindness of disposition; and I say to every such person, "You have received one of the most blessed of gifts in your capacity of employing wit and humor, and so of enlivening society; but if you have perverted it so as to make your presence dangerous, or so that people are afraid of you, and so that your shadow falls depressingly on them, you have prostituted one of the most glorious gifts of God to one of the most infernal purposes." Beware how you use wit, irony, sarcasm. Beware of indulging in jests at other people's expense. Beware of getting the reputation of being smart at the expense of others. Take heed to what is required by kindness in this world. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men."

The habit of contradiction and argument, a combative tendency, leads to a vast amount of excitement and disquiet in life. We know what it is to be a "bully." We see men boasting of their strength, and saying provoking things in the hope of getting into a quarrel with their fellow men. There are men that may be called *logical* bullies—men that want to argue with you. If you say anything, they dispute it. Argument leads to disputation speedily, and disputation to quarreling, and quarreling to ill-will.

Therefore, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Let them alone. If they do not want to have a conflict with you, if they do not want to measure swords with you, do not annoy them. Do not make a moral gladiator of yourself.

I cannot describe that realm of unhappiness and disturbance which is created by the tale-bearer, by the scandal-monger, by the man who rejoices in evil. There are men who go about seeking bad

news. And when they have heard a thing unfavorable to somebody, they straightway tell of it. When they go home, they have a kind of chuckling laugh over it, and say, "I have found out something about that man; have you heard it? It is too good to keep." And they smack their lips over it. They are lovers of carrion.

There are men who have an intuition for discovering faults in others. They see them as quick as a flash of lightning; and they tell of them wherever they go. There is the ill-conceived jest; there is the vulgar allusion; there is the story that ought never to be repeated; there are the things that ought to be hidden; and these things are their special delight. Men drag out of the family things which the sacredness of the family should secrete and smother where they were born. There are men who are vampires, feeding on their fellow men in this way. And the amount of ill-will that is created in a neighborhood by tale-bearers is astounding.

The only excuse which men give for thus reporting things that are evil in regard to others, is that *they are true*. But you have no right to report anything evil of a man, even if it is true, unless you have a benevolent purpose. The law is unequivocal, that you have no right to tell anything about your neighbor that will damage him, unless you do it for the sake of moral principle. If it be a crime against the public, you may be obliged, for the sake of the public, to reveal it. If there be danger that it will overwhelm innocent parties, you may be obliged to reveal it for the sake of shielding those parties. But if there is no purpose of good in your mind, you have no right to make it known. If your neighbor has done a mean thing, you have no right to report it, and so expose him to contempt or ridicule, unless the public good demands it.

The indiscretions of life are innumerable. There are few persons who have not their unwatchful hours in which they do or say things that are not wise. Every man has his train of infelicities. But as they sprung from him, they ought not to be carried far away from him. Let them alone. *The tale-bearer kindles a fire that burns to the lowest hell*. More separations of friends, more contentions and divisions, more heartaches, in this world, have been occasioned by tale-bearing than by any other cause.

A scandal-monger—a man who carries damaging news to one person concerning another—is like one who carries contraband goods; and the partaker is as bad as the thief. There ought to be some law against the spreading of scandals. It is a monstrosity that ought not to be tolerated among the children of God; but I am obliged to say that persons who are in many respects worthy to be called Christians, indulge in carrion-eating, and seem to relish their diet.

There is often an indiscreet frankness which leads to great trouble among men. Telling men unpleasant truths about themselves, telling them their faults, telling them what other people have said about them,—this is generally unwise. Blurting out the truth about people into their faces is impolite.

There is an impression that if a man has a truth he should let it fly, hit where it may; that the truth should be uttered whatever it may be. A doctor might as well stand with his saddle-bags and scatter their contents through the community, as a man tell all that he knows about people indiscriminately. Medicine is to be carefully administered. It is the work of skill to properly administer it. It is to be given according to the constitution, temperament, and condition of the patient. And truth, being a medicine, instead of being thrown about heedlessly, and indiscriminately, and with brutal barbarity, is to be administered with care and discretion. The truth is to be used with great consideration. It is an instrument, and is to be employed, not rashly, but wisely. Its use should be governed by a spirit of benevolence. Do not speak the truth bluntly and without consideration, and then take to yourself credit for great frankness in doing it.

I might mention indiscreet urgency in religious teaching. There is often a lack of consideration of times and seasons, of moods and temperaments, and of the feelings and dispositions of men. Far be it from me to dissuade you from being in season and out of season in religious instruction; nevertheless a truly wise and benevolent person will often find occasion to be silent—more often, perhaps, than to speak. But there are many religious persons who go about with an incisiveness and pertinacity which annoy and vex people, and introduce an element of disquiet by which more harm than good is done. Live peaceably in your vocation as religious conversationalists.

You will see that these tendencies spring from selfishness and pride and the predominance of your lower nature; and you are to see to it that, under various guises and pretenses, it does not rise up and provoke men. “As much as lieth in you,” govern yourself; restrain yourself; temper all your dispositions by the great law of love. Then you can, so far as these causes are concerned, “live peaceably with all men.”

But there are causes which you cannot overrule. There are times in which you cannot live peaceably with men. You must therefore make up your mind to go through scenes of disagreement with men. But you must see to it that you go through them in a manly and Christian way.

First, where you are tempted to commit evil, there is a great distinction to be drawn between suffering evil and committing evil. A man may oftentimes suffer the penalty of a law rather than commit evil which is legalized. For instance, I sheltered run-away slaves, which was an illegal act; and I look back with extreme pleasure upon my course in that regard. The law said I should not do it, and humanity said I should, and I said I would. If I had known that I should be arraigned and punished for it, I would have met the punishment and suffered it rather than have denied succor to the oppressed. I would not do a wrong thing, even if the law commanded me to do it. I would not neglect to do a right thing which I knew was fundamentally important, even for the sake of obeying the law. A man must do good. He must not do evil though the king should command him to. There is a higher law than any human enactment, and there is a higher authority than any earthly monarch. Men may pervert this truth, but it is none the less a great truth.

There are cases, therefore, in which when you are commanded by the law to do evil, you will be obliged to resist, and make great disturbance. You *must* resist; and it will not be your fault that there is a disturbance of peace. And there are a great many other cases where, in your business relations and social connections, you will be placed in circumstances in which the interest of others pushes you toward the commission of evil, but in which you must not do it; as, for instance, where a will is made, and one of the heirs is determined to break it unjustly if he possibly can. He requires some one of the other heirs to go with him, and he concentrates on you all manner of persuasions, and attempts to garnish the act, and bring you to the commission of it. If you will not yield, he will break with you. There is that million of dollars, and that will must be broken, so that the money can flow down into his pocket; and you are standing in the way, and opposing the interest of one of your own flesh and blood. But you are satisfied that the will is right. You are satisfied that, whatever may have been the discretion of the maker, he was in a state to make his will; and you say, "No, I cannot join you." The rage and fury of excited avarice which you behold is not sufficient to swerve you from what you regard to be your duty. You stand firm in your sense of justice; and you must stand firm.

A river complains to the rock on its bank, of the noise which it is making. Why does the rock make the noise? Because it will not budge, and the water will. So that it is the water, and not the rock, that makes the noise. The rock stood there, and had a

right to stand there; and if the water would beat against it and make a noise, it was not the rock's fault. The man who is free from wickedness is accused by wicked men of making all the turmoil and excitement; but he does not. He stands by the right, and they are determined to pursue the wrong; and they dash against him. If a man is honest, false accusations will be brought against him, and he will get the reputation of being dishonest. Those who are rebuked by his honesty will lie about him and slander him. A man must be honest and faithful, but he will have to suffer for his fidelity. A man must stand for the right, no matter what happens. He must keep the peace as far as possible; but he must keep peace with his own conscience. He must do that which seems to him to be right. And having done that, he is to stand. Stand in your integrity. And if there is around you, in consequence of it, the fire of persecution, you are not to blame. You have not broken the peace.

You recollect that when the old tyrant had vexed and annoyed Israel through years of misrule, and the prophet had attempted to see that the laws were obeyed, and that the welfare of the people was maintained, at every point the king said to him, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" The tyrant, the man who was to blame, put the blame on the man that resisted him. Wicked men charge those who have resisted their wickedness with all the mischief and disturbance that ensues.

Christian virtue sometimes stands in the way of men's pleasure. Sometimes it happens that an individual is solicited to taste wine which conscientiously he cannot touch, and he stirs up great resistance by refusing. "What," his companions say to him, "do you refuse to join us?" "I should love to join you if I could, but the thing is one which I cannot do. It is not right for me with my present conscience and judgment. It may be right for you, and I will not attempt to be your master; but I cannot do it." "So you will break up the pleasure of this evening, will you? You will stand out, will you?" "Certainly, I must stand out." And so there is a great deal of disturbance and ill-feeling. But you do not breed it. They ask you to violate your own conscience for their pleasure, but you cannot do it. If you suffer, you must; and if they suffer it is their fault—not yours.

It sometimes happens that a person is placed in peculiarly trying circumstances. A man is totally abstinent. Not only has he vowed that he will abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks, but his conscience has gone with his vow. He finds himself in a large and fashionable company. He sees that his refusing to take a

glass of wine will be construed into a rebuke of all the persons present.

A young man goes into a rich man's house, the house of his patron, and he is urged to take wine. He says, "I am a pledged man, and I cannot." His companions laugh, and say, "Oh, of course; we understand all that; but you will not refuse under the circumstances." And so young men are tempted by the thoughtless to give up their principles. If the young man is firm, and says, "No, I cannot," and the man whose guest he is says, "You do not mean to insult me in my own house, do you?" the trial is doubly severe. It is very painful for a young man to be put in such a situation; and it is very ill-judged hospitality to put a man in such a situation. There is a gift which enables a man, under such circumstances, to say "No" without offense; but all have not that gift. And yet, one must stand to his principles though it be offensive, though it disturb the whole circle, nay, though it kill him. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;" but do not slay your conscience for the sake of other people's peace.

Those who are called to teach and spread abroad unwelcome truths, must make up their minds not to live peaceably. There is nothing that creates more excitement in a community, not accustomed to thorough preaching, than the bold utterance of truths which rebuke men's lives, and call their dispositions to account, and rouse their consciences, without giving them power to control their passions. So it comes to pass that pioneer preachers in every community are persecuted. It is said that they are not wise. Nobody is wise in that respect. No man can preach the truth faithfully without offending men. Our Master could not do it. The apostles could not. The most gifted preachers that the world has ever produced have not preached the truth so that men have not resisted it. A man must make up his mind, that if he fulfills his duty in preaching, there will be great excitement. It is quite possible for a man to be a disturber of the community, and yet a benefactor in it.

There was a time when nothing so universally excited the opposition and rage of men as to preach that no man had a right to own his fellow man, and that slavery was a sin against God, and an offense against liberty, and that it was impolitic. I have seen the time when to have said so much as that would have caused a rustle over the congregation. So many words would have set on fire a dozen newspapers. But now such things are palatable. Now they can be said without creating the least disturbance. Many

men who during the anti-slavery excitement gained the reputation of being hot-heads and fanatics, were, after all, heroic men, wise men, peace-loving men, as we look back upon them now. They bore testimony to the truth against a great national sin; and sin does not like to be rebuked.

So, then, no earnest preacher of the truth can avoid disturbance by any wisdom or guile. No man can preach the whole truth and not anger men. It does not need to be rashly preached. Because it is necessarily offensive, you should all the more seek to make it as little offensive as possible without taking away its power, its edge, and its effectiveness.

You cannot attempt to oppose men's worldly interests for the sake of public morality, for the reformation of the community, for the purification of the ballot; you cannot undertake to carry ethical law, with all its power, into a commercial community, without rousing up an immense amount of anger and indignation. But somebody must do these things. No Christian man has a right to see the city in which he lives go down like Sodom and Gomorrah and put out no hand nor voice to save it. Can anything be more wicked than for persons to sit still in comfortable places while the community is reeking with corruption around them? Christian men are bound to be "lights." They are bound to be "salt." But in a community, what "salt" is there where all manner of flagrant and outrageous vices are fomenting and spreading; where the whole city is full of pit-falls; where the young are in danger of being destroyed? We are to take care of our children the best way we can; but thousands of children have nobody to care for them. Your son may escape; but the young man from the country, who has no father nor mother, and no one that cares for him, will, because he is so frank and sympathetic, be the first victim. A young man who is cold and selfish is not in so much danger; but a young man who is warm-hearted and generous is liable to be taken advantage of and ruined. The sweetest fruit is destroyed by the plague-rot first; and men who believe in the life to come, and the power of true godliness; men who are under the influence of God's beneficence—are they to live undisturbed by the vast brood of drinking-houses in the community? Are they to escape from the allurements of damnable gambling saloons? And shall Christian men behold the destruction of the young by vice, and do nothing to shield and rescue them? But you cannot expect to take these steps in the work of reformation without bringing upon yourself reproach, and contempt, and hatred, and bitter persecution.

Only one thing more. We have received our ideas of Christian duty historically, to a very large extent. They have come down to us from the notions which prevailed in despotic and absolute governments. Any government where the king or ruling class makes all the laws, the people have, comparatively speaking, little to do. They are not bound, or they feel that they are not bound, to do more than to obey. But in a community where the people themselves make their laws, and procure the administration of those laws by the election of their officers, there arises a very different class of questions of ethical duty, and a very different set of influences, from those which have been handed down to us from olden times. It is simply preposterous for a Christian nation to be controlled in detail by its government. I hold that every nation is responsible for the administration of its laws. It is the duty of the church to see that Christian communities are instructed, and that the wicked shall not have power to guide the system which the State has committed to them, but that it shall be entrusted to good men.

Shall I, when I see a thief breaking into my house, draw the bed-clothes over my head, and say, "Let him take what he will if he will not shoot me?" Would that be manly? The house of such a man ought to be burned over his head. A man in his household is like an officer stationed in a fort; and he is bound to defend it against burglars and sneak-thieves. If more men who own houses would visit condign punishments on sneak-thieves there would be far less of these pests in society. If a dozen men were shot dead while breaking into houses, there would be a great dearth of burglars. It is because men let these desperadoes do what they will, it is because men surrender their own houses to criminals, that there are so many thefts and burglaries. And it is because the people give up the control of their affairs to the government that there is so much mismanagement and corruption. In becoming a citizen of the country, you put yourself under the obligation of seeing to it that the State suffers no harm at the hands of wicked men. You are bound to set yourself against selfishness and avarice, and against all corruption, whether it be in high or in low places. You are bound to see that your courts are pure. If it requires time, that is what time is given you for. If it requires effort, that is what you are under obligation to give. If it requires you to do things which are disgustful, and which you do not want to do, that is the yoke which Christ lays on you. It is a shame and disgrace to Christians and churches that there are so many scoundrels in positions of trust in New York and Brooklyn. It is because we have a limited conception of our duties. It is because there has

been a lack of training with regard to their obligations in ethical matters, that there are such outbreking sins in our midst. Christians ought to be an insurance against the perpetration of mischiefs by rascals in the community. If there is anything that Christian men ought to do, it is to see to it that the administration of the laws is in the hands of good men. If there is anything which is a disgrace to any community, it is that supineness of the church which allows the worst men to sit in power and corrupt the government, and undermine the prosperity of the nation, and destroy it. If there is one thing that is needed in the community more than another, it is that offenders should be arrested, and in the sight of all men be punished—not cruelly, not without your sympathy, and not without your sorrow, but nevertheless firmly and persistently. There should be such a moral impression produced that sin shall be dangerous, and that righteousness shall be the only safety, to the individual, the family and the State. “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men ;” but when men persist in destroying the good order and purity of the community, you cannot be at peace with them until you have subdued them.

Christian brethren, it is not enough to make atonement for past neglect. You are to fire your indignation so that it shall burn like a torch ; and you are to search out the causes of corruption, and probe them to the bottom. Make up your mind to take time to do your duty. You must drill as common soldiers. You must think more of the interests of the State, and less about your individual interests. You must take care of the public welfare. If Christian men neglect the public welfare, what can you expect of those who are under no moral influences, and are guided by no Christian principle ? If you do not look after the weal of society, with what reason can you turn upon the selfish and scrambling men who are plundering the community ? In your course, hereafter, Christian men, the State must find its preservation.

Young men, and men advanced in years, turn out, every one of you, and fulfill your whole duty. Be instant in season and out of season. Be true to your political obligations. You are never following your Master more than when you attempt to serve the State faithfully. See to it that the commonwealth is delivered from the thrall of vice, and brought under the dominion of virtue and integrity, and made prosperous by righteousness.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We bless thy name, our Father, that thou hast not made the way of supplication straight and narrow, as is the way of duty; but that thou hast made it easy to pray unto thee. Our hearts gush forth spontaneously, sometimes in praise, sometimes in supplication, and in communion often. We thank thee that thou hast so clothed the earth with all the tokens of thy wisdom and power that when we rejoice in things most beautiful our thoughts glance off from the things made, to thee, the Creator of them, and that day by day we find it not hard, in thought, in feeling, nor even in expression, to commune with thee, praying always, giving thanks, making supplication. We thank thee that thou hast made our intercourse with thee as the conversation of a child with a parent. We rejoice that thou art accessible to our thought. Though we do not understand thy providence, though we often bring to thee things that are not right, yet we rejoice that thou dost accept us by the goodness that is in thee, rather than by the goodness that is in us. It is through thy grace and mercy and paternal goodness that thou dost accept us. Thou dost not measure thy gifts according to our desert, but according to thine own generosity. Thou art surrounding us with bounty more than we know, or can know until we enter the life that is to come. Thy glory is in doing good. The heavens are filled with thy presence, and the earth doth not know all that secret of God which is moving in the affairs of men. We rejoice, O Lord, that our strength is in thee. We desire to glory in thee, and in thee only. Not when riches increase, not when we become powerful, not when we reach the ends of our ambition, not when our earthly estate is all that we would have it, do we desire to glory. We desire to glory in this: that God loves us; that his providence is around us; that all his ways are appointed for us; that we are strengthened by a supervising kindness; that day by day we have the privilege of looking to thee and communing with thee.

So thou art granting pleasure in pain, strength in weakness, and guidance in perplexity. Thou art evermore giving us the best company. Even in the depths of solitude there are about us thine angel bands; and thou thyself, by the Spirit, art communing with us.

Now, we desire to live worthy of this vocation to which we are called, and to walk with a consciousness that we are preparing for the invisible realm, and to know more and more perfectly the will of God. We pray that thou wilt teach us to conform our whole life to thy wisdom. May we have that wisdom which belongs to purity. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that more and more the law of God may shine in the example of his people on earth. Purify thy people of every name, everywhere. May they be more courageous for the truth. May they be more and more earnest in the great conflict which is being waged against selfishness and pride and avarice, and all other forms of sin. We pray that thou wilt inspire them to do more valiantly than they have ever done in the building up of thy kingdom among men.

We pray for the poor, for the ignorant, for the neglected, for the outcast, for the friendless. We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless those who are carrying forth the tidings of salvation among mankind. We pray that they may be strengthened with great faith and patience and perseverance to do the work of the Lord.

We rejoice, O Lord, that thou art giving the signs and tokens of thine advancing power in our own land, and in other lands. Though suffering rules still, though thou art obliged by pains and penalties to put forward

thy kingdom, yet we rejoice to believe that the day is preparing and advancing in which thou canst work more by pleasure and joy and peace, and less by sorrow. Even so, reveal, we beseech of thee, thy power. More and more may men rise from their lower conditions and that animal life in which thou must needs deal with them by force, and come into that sacred atmosphere where thou canst say to them, Henceforth I call you not servants, but friends.

O thou blessed God, we ask not the revelation of the secrets of thy providence; we ask not to pry into the future, nor to look behind the curtain and see what thou hast prepared. Grant only this: that we may have faith in thee and thy providence, and that we may go forward with hope, so that in the midst of doubts and discouragements we may be saved by faith. May we have that faith which works by love. And so may we be prepared for our earthly duties, and be prepared therein for that rest which remaineth for the people of God in heaven.

Vouchsafe thy blessing, to-night, to every one present. Listen to each one's desire and prayer. Draw near to all who are in trouble; to all who are afflicted; to all who are suffering in body or mind. By their troubles and afflictions and sufferings prepare them for a better life here, and for life hereafter.

We pray that thou wilt recall the wandering. Rouse up those who are indifferent to their moral state. Draw near, to-night, we beseech of thee, to all who have laid aside their former purposes, and back-slidden from their faith. Draw near to all who are far from thee by evil works. Arouse in them a conscience toward a better life. We pray that there may be the beginnings of better living, and that men may strive, who have not striven before, to forsake their easily besetting sins, and to put on the whole armor of God. We pray that thou wilt call many who are hesitating to a profession of their faith in Christ. We beseech of thee that thy kingdom may come in all the churches about us, and that this season may be a season of reviving, and that thy cause may be advanced, and thy name glorified among men.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, shall be the praise forever and forever. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee to bless the word of instruction. Grant that thy people may be prepared, full-armed, and keep drilled in every duty, and take their part of the duties in the household, in the church, in the affairs of society, in the State, everywhere. May the witness of Christ be with his disciples. May they go about doing good. May they seek to allay all passions and irritations by inspiring goodness and purity and integrity. So may they preserve, by the salt of divine grace, the affairs about them, that thy name may be honored and glorified.

Accept our thanks for all the mercies of the sanctuary to-day—for the service of song; for communion with thee; for our meditations. We thank thee for all the bounties of this Sabbath day here. May its spirit rest upon us during all the week, and restrain in us all that is evil, and inspire in us whatever is good. And so may thy Word be the man of our counsel, and our guide to eternal life.

And the praise shall be given to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

FAITH IN PRAYER.

I shall speak on the scene, a description of which I read in your hearing, as a part of the opening service this evening. It is recorded by two of the Evangelists—Matthew and Mark. It is not mentioned by either Luke or John. You will find it in the 15th chapter of Matthew and the 7th chapter of Mark, respectively. It is a scene which may be called the interview of Jesus with the Syro-Phœnician woman. It took place, probably, about four or six months previous to Christ's crucifixion. It was therefore during the last part of the last year of the Saviour's life.

You know that Christ's ministry was pivoting upon Capernaum, which, after his rejection by the Nazarenes, became his second home, and his permanent residence. He was accustomed to make circuits. Several of them may be distinctly traced. Some say that there were three grand circuits. Others make four or five. It is probable that the number is far greater than any have computed. His custom was not dissimilar, in this respect, to the customs of the teaching rabbis of his own people. He used to go out and take a line of villages, passing on, from day to day, instructing and performing works of mercy until the circuit was completed, and he returned home again. In that way he traversed the north and the south parts of Palestine. But very little record is made of his visiting the western coast. He seems to have gone but one single time (and that was the time on which I am commenting) north of the boundary line. In this instance he went up to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. We must not interpret *coast*, as used here, to mean sea-coast, and suppose that he went on to the Mediterranean. It is the boundary line that is meant. It is doubtful whether it can be so construed as to mean that he entered into the provinces in which Tyre and Sidon stood, though it is probable that he did. He went out of his ordinary circuit, and penetrated far to the north, into the province, [probably on the eastern side of it], in which Tyre and Sidon stood.

It is said that multitudes thronged about the Saviour; and it is very evident that vast numbers accompanied him wherever he

went. It was a great inconvenience for many reasons; and for some reasons it was very dangerous; and for still other reasons such excessive crowds were obstructive. That is, they hindered the main object of his mission. From the record here he evidently sought to take himself out of the whirling crowd, and entered into a house, and would have no man know it; but he could not be hid.

You should recollect, in the first place, that he was in a strange country. We are not to suppose that we know all the circumstances, by any means. We do not know what foreign jealousies and what suspicions existed. Being a Jew, he brought with him such elements of disturbance as were likely to make trouble. If there were conjunctions of circumstances which made the magistracy suspicious of his intrusion, there might be reason in that why he should not desire such excessive publicity. More than that; we may suppose, what we know was true, that after days of excessive teaching he was wearied and over-spent. The whole crowd of men looked on him, each one feeling, as it were, that he only did so. It is one thing for a thousand people, each one for himself, to see one man, and another thing for one man to put himself in communication with a thousand people, or a multitude. The crowd scarcely thought of our Saviour's weariness or his convenience; but he felt the power of the pressure, and he might well desire to hide himself.

Moreover, this was in the very heat of the conflict which had raged during the last six months of his life on earth. The bitter jealousy of the Pharisees, and their seeking to entrap him, threw upon him the necessity of extreme caution; and his injunction, when he had healed a person, or performed a wonderful miracle, was, "See thou tell no man. Go home to thine house and to thy kindred." He desired to quench the rising enthusiasm of the people. There was danger in it.

More than that, there was in these crowds a great deal of mere secular curiosity. There was foam without substance. And it became necessary, even for spiritual reasons, that he should in some degree check this effervescence.

It was when he was retiring into a house, that the heathen woman heard of his presence. She is called a Greek. It probably is not meant that she had Greek blood. The term *Greek* was used to discriminate between the Jews and foreigners. They were called Greeks who were not of the Jewish nation. Everything outside of the party of the Jews was considered as Greek. She was a Syrian woman; and, among the Syrians, she was of that special stock to

which was given the name *Phenician*. She was not of the Carthaginian stock, but of the Phenician stock in Syria. She was a Gentile woman. She was not a Jew. And not being a Jew, it did not make any difference what she was. But she had heard of the Saviour, and she had followed him, evidently, before he went into the house, and besought him with great importunity.

"And behold, a certain woman of Canaan, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came out of the same coasts [that is, the same region], and fell at his feet, and cried unto him, and besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil."

There is something very affecting in this. In the first place, she was a woman; and the whole narrative shows that she was a superior woman. She had not only deep affections, and self-sacrificing affections, but she had moral intuition. She had a presentment or feeling within her that this was an extraordinary personage—a man sent from God; and before she saw him she had the feeling, "This is the Deliverer of my child"—for she seems to have lived for her child, and not for herself. It is a great thing for a great-souled person to plead for another; but when a woman's enthusiasm pleads, when the self-sacrificing love of a woman pleads, there is mystery in such pleading; and who shall withstand it? But when the woman is a mother, and when to her natural affection is added all that power and intensity which come from the love of her own child, who can withstand the eloquence of her pleading? And when that child is a daughter, and the mother's heart kindles, and her fervor of love glows, what can withstand that? If it were only sickness it would not be so bad; but when the child not only is sick, but is the victim of a demoniac possession; and when, worse than that, it is an unclean demon that possesses the child, who is the pride and the joy of her life, the object of her hope, and all that she had imagined for the child is blighted, and the mother pleads under the pressure of all these painful circumstances, who can withstand her importunity? The veil is drawn over the details and particulars, and the child is shielded, as it were, from prurient curiosity; but it was a mother whose daughter was beset by the unclean devil, and she heard of Christ, and followed him in the way, and besought him with tears, yea, and cast herself abjectly down on the ground, after the manner of the Orientals, as it were taking him by the feet, saying, "I beseech thy help. My daughter! my daughter!" Could anything resist that?

It is one of the most extraordinary things in the whole Gospel

narrative, that our Lord listened to this appeal without a flush, without a change of feature, and without a word. He sat perfectly still, and she poured out more than the precious ointment. It was more than the alabaster box that was broken. It was a heart that was broken, and was pouring upon him its pleading entreaty. And he answered not a word. Dumb and cold was he. So misers, called men, when those who are suffering the pangs of hunger plead before them, sit and hold their treasure, and bar the gates leading to their mercy and pity, do they not? But was he a miser of mercy? Was he hard-hearted? Did he not care for all this? The disciples thought not. His attitude was such, and his manner was such, that they really thought he was disgusted and annoyed by the importunity of this woman. And they came and said to him, "Send her away; she crieth after us. It is disgraceful; it is annoying; it is vexatious." They took this idea, evidently, from his appearance, and thought he was ready for it, and wanted it, himself.

I think his reply to them is quite as mysterious and strange as his cold conduct toward her.

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

That the Jews should think that their country was *the* country of the world, and that God never thought of anything but Judea and Palestine, was natural. In that respect they did not differ materially from any other country on the globe. Every nation feels that God thinks of it first and all the time. So the Jews felt. Therefore, when the Saviour said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," the import of his reply seemed to be: "My special mission is to the Jews. If there are any Jews let them come. As for this Syro-Phenician woman, this Gentile, she must wait." So the disciples were on trial too, as we shall see.

But she was not to be put off in this way. It is not easy to quench a fire that is fed with such fuel as hers. She had watched too long. She had had too many days of misery, and too many nights of anguish. The iron had gone too far into her soul. What did she care what people thought of her? What did she care what he thought of her? Her feeling was only this: "If there is power in importunity, my child shall be healed."

"Then came she and worshiped;" that is to say, she made obeisance. It was not kneeling down to say her prayer to him. It was simply an act of prostration in recognition of his honorable standing and superiority.

The woman had stated her case. She had shown her desire. Her daughter was possessed of a devil, and she had pleaded with all

the vehemence which the circumstances were calculated to inspire. And Christ sat dumb, except that he cast a few words coldly at his disciples. But there was something, evidently, that she discerned; for she came and threw herself down again before him; and there never was a more royal oration pronounced since the world began than that which fell from this mother's lips, when, with all her soul, she said, "Lord, help me!" It needed no addition. It will bear no exposition.

Now begins the last stage of the drama—for this is the unfolding of a drama.

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Let the children first be filled."

Oh, bigoted Jew!

"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs."

Oh, hard, cruel words! To say that to a mother, to say it to a woman, to say it to a woman in such distress, to say it to a woman in distress about her daughter, and her daughter afflicted by such an ignominious sickness—this was the dealing of Christ with her. "I cannot help you. You belong to the Gentile dogs. I am sent to the Jews. Go away."

That did not daunt her.

"Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the children's crumbs which fall from their master's table."

O power of humility! O conquering power of meekness! O invincibleness of a persistent love! That broke through, and Jesus effulged, and all seeming passed away; and then, with eye, with look, with gesture and with words, he said, "O woman! great is thy faith. For this saying go thy way. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. The devil is gone out of thy daughter."

It seems that the child was healed while this was going on. While he was neglecting the mother, the message secretly went forth from him which effected the cure of the daughter.

Now, every one of you will ask, "Why was all this? Was it not strange?" No, I think it was very much like Christ's way; and I think I can very clearly perceive why it was. I think, too, that I can make it plain to you. It was not, I am sure, a want of sympathy. It is not necessary that I should argue that. It was not national bigotry. It was from Christ that the world learned true catholicity. It was not because he sympathized with the prejudices of the age, the Jewish prejudices, for he broke up those prejudices. He was oftentimes, himself, stoned or threatened with violence because he made known the liberal sentiments which have prevailed. We shall understand it a little better, I think, if we look at some other cases not unlike this. There is a

scene which is the counterpart of this case, in which a father brings to Christ his son, also possessed of a demon. He is put off in the same way. The father says:

"Master, I beseech of thee, look upon my son. He is my only child. Have mercy on him. I have brought him to thee. He hath a dumb spirit, and is sore vexed. The spirit taketh him, he suddenly crieth out, and wheresoever he taketh him, he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away. And the spirit, bruising him, hardly departeth from him. And I brought him and spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, but they could not cure him."

One would suppose the presentation of this piteous case would bring an instantaneous cure; but it brought forth a rebuke.

"O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring thy son hither to me. And they brought him unto him. And when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell to the ground, and wallowed foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him; but if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

And still Jesus did not do it.

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

Just then it was that the spirit of faith and trust was developed in him. Then it was that Christ spoke the word, and the child was healed.

There was another scene which was, if possible, still more extraordinary. I refer to the case of Christ's dealing with those whom he loved with a personal affection. I mean the sickness of Lazarus, and the sending of Mary and Martha to him.

There was great persecution. Christ had gone down beyond the Jordan. Lazarus was sick unto death. The sisters sent to Jesus. He abode in the place where he was two days after the message came, and Lazarus died. Then, afterwards, he came to Jerusalem. You will recollect the memorable scene. It is too long for recital and comment here; but the fact is, that when word was brought to him that there was this sickness and sorrow in the house which had become so dear to him, he did not run, but waited, and waited on purpose, for two days. Still it all turned out right in the end—better than if he had made haste to heal the man.

What, then, may we understand to have been the reason why our Saviour so often delayed? You are to recollect, in the first place, that he was in danger of exciting, by the profusion of his mercies, mere curiosity. He was in danger of setting all the land afoam with wild excitement, so that the people would come thronging to him, as our people go to see Signor Blitz, or anybody else

that would do necromancer's work; and it was necessary to guard against that. Nay, there was danger of arousing the baser selfishness of men. He said to the multitude, once: "It was not on account of the miracles that you followed me; it was on account of the bread. You did not care for the miracles, but having had a good meal, you were after another." He saw that his ministration was in danger of being unto death. He saw that it might beget nothing higher than the spirit of the swine, that ate, and crunched, and ate, and squealed for more. If going through the land and performing, on the right hand and on the left, miracles of mercy, made the selfish yet more selfish, and the curious yet more curious, and the frivolous yet more frivolous, and the worldly yet more worldly, then his ministrations would not be desirable. He saw that it was necessary for men to have more than mere external help. He was not simply a philanthropist, relieving men from sickness. He was a philanthropist, to be sure, but his philanthropy was a means to an end. He was a spiritual teacher. He came into the world to give a new idea of manhood. He came to bring a new inspiration of power to the inward life. Here were men loving crowns, coveting scepters with power in them, building houses and furnishing them, and saying to their souls, "Eat, drink, and be merry." Here were men swayed by all temporal impulses. And Christ came to inspire a higher thought of manhood: not with power of genius in beauty, or order; not with power in legislation, or statesmanship; not with power in wealth. "Blessed are the pure in heart; blessed are the meek; blessed are the happiness-makers; blessed are you when men shall persecute you"—such were his utterances. He came to awaken in men's minds thoughts of a character transcendently greater than any external power of secular development.

Now, if he had proceeded in his works of mercy, knowing that men all the time were fed by their senses, and that the hungry had bread and nothing else, and that the sick had restoration and nothing else, he would have been playing into the temporality and secularity of men's lives. Therefore, you will find him all through his earthly life insisting that the temporal should be made to depend upon some kind of spiritual development. So, when an epileptic was brought to him, he said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." But that was not what the man came for. He came, not on account of his sins, but for something else. It was only after some of the Scribes murmured, and said within themselves, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" that Jesus said, "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk." The

healing was secondary. That was to come afterwards. First was to be spirituality, new manhood. Then was to come external renovation. In every instance, probably, *faith, hope*, was made the condition, either overtly or impliedly, on which he performed these acts of mercy. Faith was that which he was attempting to teach by his kindness, by his restoring power, by his personal intercourse, by his whole influence. Whether it was hope, love, sympathy, rebuke or condemnation, still it was this one inward life that he was aiming at, and that he sought to inspire.

In the case of the Syro-Phœnician woman—a woman of great courage and strength of mind—there was something more than the mere restoration of her child that was to be accomplished. Here was a light to be kindled. Here was to be a disclosure, both before the disciples, and in all the region round about. She was to be a witness for Christ. Here was to be a disclosure of more than natural affection. Here was to be brought out, by holding her back, a stronger faith and purpose, and not the impetuous purpose of a dominant will. There was to be brought out a sweet submission. She was to receive the pelting words, she was to endure the cold treatment, and she was to maintain all her sweetness of affection, and all her faith. She was not to be put off from her importunity, but her importunity was to take on more gracious forms. And when, replying to her scornfully, he said: “Dog, do you suppose you can have the children’s bread?” she broke through it, and in all the sweetness of her faith said: “Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table.”

Ah! that was nobility. That was womanhood. That had immortality in it. There was that for which he had been looking.

Then he said to her: “O woman, great is thy faith. Go. It is done.” The child was healed; but no more than the mother. The devil was cast out of the child; but no more than it was out of the mother. The child was brought back to the mother. Yes, and the mother was brought back to God. It was a double miracle that was performed. There was an inside one and an outside one; and the inside one was the more resplendent and glorious. Oh, dull-eyed and hard of heart are we, not to see the mercy of this transaction. I wonder that I ever stumbled over it.

Take the case of a child in the household. It is fractious, wayward, and vagrant in desire, and comes in contact with the parental authority. The mother sits firm, and deals with the child till her authority and chastisement, mingled with mercy and love, have subdued the child, and it yields to her, and is at peace. Is there a

more perfect peace to a child than that which is based on entire submission? If the mother had let the child have its own way, it would not have been half so happy as it is now that it has been broken in its will, and made to submit to its mother. It experiences that royal hour of relief which follows discipline. I am familiar with that. I know there is a sweetness in the hour which follows wrong forgiven, wickedness subdued, the devil cast out.

If, now, you will go through with this solution of the case under consideration, it will tend to throw light upon many passages of the Saviour's life. Why he delayed; why he seemed to carry himself in one way when really his heart was aiming in another way, is to be explained by the fact that he was, by external dealing with men, attempting to awaken in them a higher and nobler conception, and a higher and nobler inspiration.

I do not know what became of this Syro-Phenician woman. So far as history is concerned, the curtain fell, and her name is lost. One after another the most striking instances in the Gospel come up, we see them for a moment, the light glows upon them, they sink back into darkness, and we hear no more of them. So there is no further development in regard to this woman; but I cannot doubt that in all that region round about she was a witness, as was the man of whom we spoke not many evenings ago, whose name was Legion because many demons had entered into him, and who, when healed, went back, in obedience to Christ's command, to his family and friends, and then, in the cities of Decapolis, made known, as the first missionary on record, the glorious gifts and grace of God. I do not doubt, though there is no record of it, that this great-hearted woman made a greater and more noble development of her royal faith in that region round about, to the praise and glory of God manifested in his Son, Jesus Christ.

I remark, in view of this narrative, first, that God's gifts are not to be measured by what they are outwardly, but by what they do for us inwardly. I suppose it is right for a man to thank God for all his prosperity. The old farmer, at the end of the season, when his barns burst with fullness, and his granaries are golden, and his cellar is stocked, and he has more than heart could wish, is accustomed to give thanks. He is all puffed up with selfishness, and is thinking of how much he shall make; not thinking of whom he shall relieve; not thinking of money to be given, but of money to be loaned; not thinking of mercy, but of interest on interest; not thinking of how he is made better, but of how he is made stronger and richer; and saying: "I am not any more dependent on that bank or that usurer. I own my farm and what is

on it, and I will sell my stock, and this fall I will have money out at interest. I began a poor boy, but now I am one of the first men in town, and I may be chosen to go to the Legislature. Thank God! thank God!" What has he to thank God for? He has grown prosperous; but his heart is harder than it was when he was dependent on those about him. He is neither generous, nor wise, nor manly, nor good. He is puffed up by secular blessings. What has he to thank God for?

Over against him is a man who had some little position, but who was disabled by sickness. His bright intelligence was dimmed, and that mysterious fitting together of things which we call "tact," "success," seems to have slipped away from him; and one little piece of property went after another, one little scheme failed after another, and he slid down from one point to another, until he is very poor. His old friends occasionally give him a visit of pity; and they talk about him, and say, "That man promised well once; he was really a good fellow; but now he cannot do anything. He is one of those shiftless fellows that you meet here and there. Everything goes through his fingers, and he has lost pretty much all he had. And at last the poor fellow is almost a town pauper." He dies in that state; and men say: "Well, is it not lucky that he died? He would have been put up at auction for somebody to take care of him if he had lived."

In some places in New England they see who will keep the poor the cheapest. There is nothing like the ways in which charity will manifest itself! A miserable wretch—a pauper—is brought out, trembling, before the townsmen, and the questions are asked, "Who will take this man? and for how much?" And then the bidding commences. One man will take him at five dollars per month, another at four, and another at three. The man that bids the least, and the man that will keep the unfortunate creature the most scrimpingly, gets him. And what a good time the pauper must have of it! He dies, perhaps, just in time not to be put up at auction again; and everybody says, "Well, he is out of the way." And the rich farmer, on his way home from the funeral, says, "Now, boys, you must remember that we all shall die." And after supper, he says, "Jim, I want you to go, to-morrow, to the market, and see what the price of grain is."

What was the difference, in the sight of God, between these two men? One died in poverty, from neglect, and almost in disgrace. But every time God's hand struck this man to knock off some of his property, he knocked off something of that which interfered between his soul and God's mercy. And then he struck

him again. As Michael Angelo used, under the power of inspiration, to strike off from the blocks of marble, as it is said, more chips in an hour than a workman could carry away in three, coming nearer and nearer to the statue which was imprisoned in that rough stone, and which was to be brought out; so God's blows, which drive off from a man's worldly prosperity innumerable chips and splinters, bring out the lines and lineaments of his figure as a man in Christ Jesus. The man's prosperity would have been his prison, so God made him poor on the outside; but he made him rich on the inside. He blinded him outwardly, that he might light up and kindle in him an inward life and power. As he went down by the outside he went up by the inside; and when he died the angels pleaded to be permitted to go on the sweet errand of taking that ransomed spirit up; and they bore it with music to its God; and the heavens glowed as the pauper went home to glory.

But the old, fat farmer died of apoplexy, and had to fight his own way. He had nobody to lift him up and carry him heavenward, and he sank in the other direction. How different is the fate of an ungodly prosperous man, and a godly unprosperous man!

God's mercies are to be counted, not on the outside, but on the inside. If they make you selfish, and hard-hearted, and unsympathetic, and you grow close, and separate yourself from your fellow men, and you are ungodlike in the proportion in which you are prospered, woe be unto you! If God's external mercies make you better, they are tolerable. If God's chastisements make you better, thank God for them. Those unfeeling words, that cold look, and that indifferent way of Christ—what a gush of feeling they brought out from this woman's soul! That pushing away—how it brought the pleading hands out, as it were! How it caused every tendril and fiber of her heart to clasp and cling to the Saviour, and made her refuse to let him go! It was out of the apparent winter of his face that her summer came. It was out of his repulsion that her blessing came. Any dealing that makes you better inside is beneficent. And do not feel when God is dealing with you severely that he has forgotten you. It takes a great while to answer some prayers.

One day an acorn looked up and saw an oak tree over it, and did not know that this tree was its father, and pleaded with Nature, saying, "Make me such an one as that." So the squirrel took it, and raced off with it toward his nest; and on the way he dropped it on a ledge where there was a little soil, and lost it. There it germinated, and its roots struck down. And after a year the little

whip cried, "I did not pray to be a little whip; I prayed to be like that oak tree." But God did not hear. The next year it grew and branched a little; but it was not satisfied; and in its discontent it said: "O Nature, I prayed that I might be like that voluminous oak, and now see what a contemptible, little, forked stick I am." Another year came, and the winter froze it, and the summer storms beat on it, and it tugged away for its life, and its roots ran out and twined themselves around rocks and whatever else it could get hold of, and fed on the hillside. So it grew and grew till a hundred years had passed over it. Then behold how on the hillside it stands firm, and defies the winter storms and tempests. Then behold how it spreads itself abroad, and stands an oak indeed, fit to be the foundation of a prince's palace, or the keel of a ship that bears a nation's thunder round the globe!

You cannot be transformed in an instant. You cannot be changed between twilight and sunrise. When, therefore, you pray that God will regenerate your nature, will you not give him time to do such a work? When you pray for the reconstruction of your character, will you not wait till God can perform such an act of mercy? If, looking at the interior, he sees that the work can be expedited, he will expedite it; but you must be patient.

See how many times this is pressed upon us. Call to mind, for instance, the case of the importunate widow, and the unjust judge who neither feared God nor regarded man, who was as bad as he could be, and whose posterity have come down to us. The widow said to him, "Avenge me of mine adversaries," and he would not for a while; but after a time he said: "Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, lest this widow by her continual coming weary me, I will avenge her of her adversaries." The Lord said, "Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, that cry day and night unto him, though he tarry long? I tell you that he will avenge them."

Time is in God's hands, and he stretches it out wide, and we think that we are forgotten, and that he has forgotten to be gracious. Wait upon the Lord. Trust him. Do good. And be not discouraged. Is your child vagrant? Pray for him; work for him; and then wait. Afar off may be the turning, and yet it may be there. Ere long you shall see it, though your eyes do not behold it now. Do not give up your hope. Wait patiently for your child that is possessed of a devil.

O mother! have you a daughter that has an unclean spirit? Jesus remembers you. Go to him as she of Canaan went. Go, though he be in the street. Hunt for him, though he be hid in

the house. Bow down before him, and plead. Do not be put away by his silence. The wonderful silence of God, if you only knew it, is full of promise and blessing. Yea, though he frown upon you and rebuke you, and things seem to grow worse and worse, hold on, and by and by he shall say, "O woman! be it unto thee as thou wilt."

From such instances as these, carried out in every direction, we get wine. These are precious clusters. We press them, and get from them juice, which we keep from day to day, to revive our hope.

Dear brethren, we all need help, and strength, and sympathy; but there is not one of us that has not help if we only know our liberty, and sympathy; if we only know that we have a High Priest who cannot but be touched by our infirmities, and who has gone into heaven, not to abandon us, but to stand at the source of all power, to bring sons and daughters home to glory.

Bring all your wants to Christ; and always bring them with a consciousness that for the answering of your prayer, the best of all persuasions and arguments is a heart that will be made better by having its petitions answered of God. It may be that you stand between your desires and God's mercies. Seek to keep the way clear between your soul and his. Go to him for what you need, and do not misunderstand him; do not doubt him; and wait patiently, and he shall make it plain here even, and more abundantly and gloriously plain hereafter.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Thou hast been very gracious unto us, our Father. The voice of our supplication hath come up before thee. Thou hast answered us not according to the wisdom of our petition. Thou hast pierced beyond the outward blessing, and hast ministered to us spiritual things, building us up in treasure which shall be treasure hereafter. Thou hast withheld pain and sorrow. Thou hast bestowed blessings temporal without number; but above all thou hast enriched our souls, deepened our affections, purified our ambition, raised our aspirations, and taught us of ourselves. And though we do not see clearly; though it doth not yet appear what we shall be, nor what thou art, yet we know something, and the light thereof fills us with joy, and we gain hope, and await patiently the more glorious disclosure.

We know that we cannot yet receive that which is in store for us; we know that our reason is stronger than our heart; we know that we are more fruitful in thought than receptive in affection; we know that thou art not to be found by searching or reasoning; we know that we must come into thy likeness, into the greatness of thy nature, and that we must be transferred into more godliness before we can understand God. And we rejoice in thy chastisements if we view them in the light of thy truth. Thy severities as well as thy mercies are all preparing us to have the divine nature, and to be made like unto thee, and to be filled with thy presence, and with the joy of thy salvation.

Now, Lord, we pray that thou wilt continue thy good work of grace in every one of us. Though we are turned aside from the right path, though we are dilatory, though we are even fractious and disobedient, be not weary of us. Thou hast been the author of our faith; be thou the finisher. Grant that we may be led, step by step, through experience after experience, that we may have all that sweetness which is interpreted by the benefits which we derive from thee. May our hearts become more gentle and more tender, and our spirits more humble and submissive to the divine will. May we rejoice in the Lord. May we not seek our joy alone in outward things. May we learn that high above all visible things there is a realm of joy where thou art. And may we have hope until we shall know how to rejoice in thee as thou art, and for what thou art, and in thy disclosures to us of thy Spirit in all those inward intimations and impressions which thou dost pour in upon thy children.

We pray that thou wilt deliver us from the fear of men, and from the seductions of ease. Deliver us from men's praise, which is praise for things secular, and is demeaning. May we love only that praise which exalts, and which is as a wind that is bearing us toward the heavenly land.

We pray that thou wilt fill us with the mind of Christ, that we may fulfill the will of Christ, and become like unto him in all things. Wilt thou bless thy servants in thy presence according to their several necessities? Enter into each heart. Commune with each one. If there are any who are in sorrow, any who are in the midst of afflictions, any who are bereaved, any who are despondent, sitting in doubt and in darkness, arise upon them with healing in thy beams. We pray that thou wilt grant that those who are seeking thee, with their faces turned upward, and wistful, not yet realizing—not yet having apprehended, may find thee. Lead them gently. Speak to them words of cheer and hopefulness. We pray for those who are out-cast. We pray for the degraded. We pray for those whose life seems to have stood still. Grant, we pray thee, that they may have a fresh call of God to hope and to endure. Grant that they may gird up their loins, and

again enter upon the conflict of life boldly, not trusting in their own strength, but in the providence and grace of God. We pray for the poor, and for those who are ignorant, and for those who are criminal, and for those who are beyond the reach of ordinary sympathy. May those who have the liberty and the time and the disposition, go forth to seek and save the lost, as did the Master. We pray that multitudes may be gathered in, and that thy name may be honored, and thy cause glorified in the salvation of men.

Spread abroad, we beseech of thee, thy truth in all this land. May the power of holiness subdue all the lusts of the flesh, and all the ambitions of ravening avarice, and the pride of power. May this great nation stand in justice. When impurity prevails, may it understand and sympathize with the divine counsels. May this nation be a benefactor of the weak, and a defender of them against the strong. And everywhere may its name be blessed by all those who look up and long for their emancipation. May it have sympathy with the struggling mass of men, and have faith in them. And may all the earth by its example be encouraged, and arise. May they hear the voice of the Master calling them through what he hath done in this land.

So hasten the day when all the nations of the earth shall have accepted the truth as it is in Jesus, and all of them shall be brought up from degradation into the full inheritance of that manhood which thou hast inspired, and which thou are producing. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be the praise evermore.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant, we beseech of thee, our Father, thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. Grant that we may discover in ourselves a law nourishing and inspiring. Deliver us from unbelief. Deliver us from desiring God's mercies for our own selfish using. Deliver us from wishing to make three tabernacles here for our own or for others' sences. Deliver us from failing to measure all that which remains of the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ. May we count it all joy when we are permitted to suffer, that we may fulfill our errand, and that suffering, as fire upon gold, shall leave us seven times purified. We commit ourselves to thy will, who can care for us. As thou dost love thine own, and dost love them unto the end, and unto death, so love us. We commit to thee ourselves, our children, our children's children, all who are dear to us, and thy cause in all its forms. Thou hast taught us to pray, Thy kingdom come, and all our desires are to thee, and all of them return to thee. As the cloud falls to the earth, and the river goes back to the sea from which it was born, so all our good is of thee, and goes back to thee from whence it came. So grant that we may live in thee. So grant that by the power of thy hidden life we may triumph over life and over death, and through death come to immortality. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be eternal praises. *Amen.*

THE TRUE VALUE OF MORALITY.

“Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things, not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.”—Tit. II. 9-15.

I have read this passage because it is an admirable example of the manner of the apostle in mingling exhortation to present duties with the recognition and enforcement of that divine power from which true obedience springs. In other words, we find blended here morality and spirituality. Both the one and the other are made to cohere, and to be in consistency with each other; and both of them spring from considerations of manhood in ourselves, and of gratitude and allegiance to God. They respect both the life that now is and the life that is to come. Morality here stands in a clearer light, and in a larger sphere, than it is accustomed to take in our hackneyed thoughts.

Because so many men stand upon a shallow morality; because it is of itself so imperfect, so insufficient, not half clasping the zone of duty, there are many that preach who are afraid of preaching morality. They give emphasis to what are regarded as the higher phases of experience. All that which proceeds from the natural faculties, men have been wont to regard as fatally imperfect—as vitiated in quality; and nothing has been in repute with some but that which was artificial—that is, produced by the direct influence of the Divine Spirit upon the mind of man. Many have supposed that all true Christian qualities were as different from the product of the natural faculty, as a graft taken from a good fruit-tree is from the seedling stalk on which it is spliced—something brought in from the outside, and inoculating the mind, or grafting it over again. So that the product of our natural faculties—what we

think, what we will, what we feel, what we seek to accomplish,—is regarded as being spurious, and only that as good which is in this sense artificial, and superinduced by a power which is acting outside of men.

Now, there is to this extent a truth in it: that as with a perfect organization, no plant is able to produce its leaves, nor its blossoms, nor its fruit, without the all-helping inspiration of the sun, so with a perfect organization to think, to feel, to choose, to act, men cannot produce the full fruit of manhood without the stimulation, guidance, and help of the Divine Spirit. But the Divine Spirit helps men, not by putting from the outside into them, but by waking up in them the power that was there; by bringing forth from their faculties that which those faculties were originally ordained to do or to be. God helps men to be men according to the nature which is infixed in them, and not according to something other and different, which is called *grace*.

Many, holding this peculiar faith, have not disesteemed morality, but have regarded it as being, comparatively speaking, foolish compared with the higher development; as if it were something separate from it; as if morality was the natural fruit, or wilding; and spirituality was divine, or something infixed from the outside in the human soul.

And, as one stream begets another, so there have been those who have rebounded to the other side, and who preach an almost entire doctrine of sentimentality and morality. They have dealt very little in “high doctrine,” as it is called. They have not been very earnest believers in the working of any great change in the dispositions of men by the divine power. Such ministrations usually have been feeble. They have not produced any very lasting results. They are not forces that produce great reformatations. They lack essential power. So the preaching of morality has been made more contemptible by the bad example of many who have preached only morality.

It will be my purpose, to-night, to show the things in which morality is useful, the sphere in which it legitimately acts; and also to show that it does not act in all those spheres to which our activity, or our manhood, is called to pass; that it is in its own sphere and place admirable, to be sought, to be inculcated, to be practiced, but not to be esteemed more highly than it ought to be esteemed.

It is difficult to give—nor is it necessary that we should give—a definition of *morality*. It is a phrase in every man’s mouth. It does not mean the same with all, however. Men take their ideas

of morality, not only from the communities in which they live, but from the circles in which they associate in any one community; and what would be considered as morality in a certain sort of neighborhood in this city, would not be considered as continental morality. Morality in a neighborhood may not be morality in a family of refinement and culture. There is something higher than morality in a cultured household. But yet men are regarded as moral who act in accordance with the laws of the land and with the customs of the community, and who avoid any outbreking sins which shock the average conscience.

It may be said, in the first place, that morality possesses the benefit of the most important negatives. A truly moral man, in the judgment of all, should be a man who does not get drunk, and does not steal, and does not commit burglary, and does not bear false witness. In other words, he is one who is rid of outbreking vices and outrageous crimes. There are a great many who pride themselves upon their morality. They behold men around about them slipping and sliding in every direction. They have been tempted; but with some resoluteness of will they have maintained their integrity, and have grown up under temptation: and they say, "I am not as other men are. I am neither extortionary, nor addicted to adultery, nor given to profane swearing, nor wedded to crimes and vices."

Well, that is creditable. You ought not to be guilty of such things. And if you have had a strong bias in your nature in any of these directions, and have arrested it, and that under circumstances where influences from without threatened to carry you away, it is no small thing. It is a great thing that you have avoided those pitfalls in which so many have been destroyed.

Still, that is not the sum of all excellence. It is not enough for you to congratulate yourself upon, as I think we shall see. I not only recognize the import and excellence of morality in such sterling virtues as these, but I exhort men to them; and I say, "If you cannot go any further, go as far as that." It is a great deal better to go so far than not to reach that point. It may be only a beginning, but it is a beginning.

Secondly, morality includes those simple virtues which are indispensable to a wholesome life in society. A man can scarcely be called moral who is destitute of worldly honor. Honor is a sort of secular and partial conscience. It is functional; but within its limits it serves a most important end, and keeps alive those fragmentary elements of a higher life, of a higher moral sense, to which all men should be brought. There is in honor something

that often puts Christian experience to shame. That is to say, in the very imperfect conceptions and educations of Christian men, we frequently see those who have a great deal of religious fervor, but very little honor; and they are scoffed at and scorned. Men say of them, "They are great in their professions of piety; they are great in talking of the kingdom of God and the life to come; but I would not trust them out of my sight." There is too much ground and reason for such remarks, frequently. In other words, it is true that men may make religious sentiment a substitute for honor. It is not a part of religion to do it; it is a blemish; it is an imperfection, where it is done; but it is sometimes done.

Honor, although it does not fill the sphere of conscience, is an invaluable element in a community. There is far too little of it. And in striving to make our children rise to a higher conception of moral sense, we must be careful that we do not take from them this more familiar, and, though narrow, yet indispensable thing which belongs to it.

Truth is one of those elements which is regarded as indispensable to morality—that is to say, such ordinary truth as passes current in life. There is a great deal of adulterated truth. It is said that gold is too soft to be cut into coin and used as a circulating medium, and that there must be an alloy in it, to fit it for passage from hand to hand; and men seem to think that it is so with truth. Although they hold that point-blank lies are never to be told, and that no man should tell untruths of a large dimension, nor use them as offensive weapons, nor, if they can help it, as weapons of defense; yet, they say, "Nature is weak; and then these little, trifling deceits do not hurt anybody. Oftentimes they help men." What are called "White" lies, what are called "Customary" lies, and what are called "Small" lies—these, I am sorry to say, do not take away a man's reputation. Vulgar lying is not considered as incompatible with morality. Truth more or less adulterated enters into the popular apprehension of morality.

Therefore morality includes honor and truth and fidelity, as well as honesty and fairness. And men say, "I am a moral man," meaning by this that they are possessed of these social and business-like virtues.

Now, are not these things good? Is it not a good thing that a man attempts to tell the truth, and only flinches in extreme emergencies? It would be better if he did not flinch at all; but suppose he tells the truth up to a certain point, and then lies a little. Is not that better than that he should not tell the truth at all? "Half a loaf is better than no bread" in religion as well as in food.

And honor, fidelity, all those qualities which, in the popular apprehension, go into the constitution of morality—they are not to be whistled down the wind; and we do not whistle them down the wind when we measure and gauge them, and when we say that they are good just so far, and for just such things, but that they must not be substituted for higher developments.

The experiences of civil life and commercial life have found out many things which are very necessary for the easy conduct of affairs. For the regulation of society, for the living together of great masses of men, various things are inculcated, as essential to morality. Public sentiment demands certain things which are necessary to morality. The laws prescribe certain things which are indispensable to morality. The customs prescribe certain negatives which enter into the popular idea of morality. And all of these are designed to take away the friction from the machinery of life, and to raise men above animal violence and above deceit, and put them upon a certain plane of moral sentiment. All that I complain of in reference to them is, that they are so low, that they are such uneducated and undeveloped forms of excellence, that they tend to dampen men's ambition, and to render them satisfied with the germs of things, instead of leading them to aspire after higher excellences of which these are but the basilar leaves. For,

First, Morality is in this grand sense founded upon external convenience, and not upon the requirements of things relating to a man's whole nature. Morality is a set of expedients. It is something higher and better than that which many men are controlled by; it will go far toward easing men of their infirmities, and helping them along; but it does not answer at all to a true conception of what manhood should be. It is not an attempt to cultivate a man's nature in all points symmetrically, and to carry it up from the seed-forms to the very highest forms of which it is susceptible. So it is a mere fragmentary thing; and it is a fragmentary thing in its lowest stages of development.

Secondly, It restrains the outplay of evil; but it does not attempt to purify and to cure the sources of evil. It withholds the hand of violence; but it does not undertake to touch the sources of violence in men's passions and appetites. It refuses permission to murder; but it does not forbid a man to feel murderously. It forbids a man to swear overtly; but it does not forbid that black cloud of tempestuous feeling out of which oaths come as lightning flashes. It forbids a man to rob; but it does not forbid a man to wish he had his neighbor's property. It forbids a man to break out into lustful impurities; but it does not restrain a lustful eye or

desire. It does not touch the seat of evil. It deals with the externalities of a man, and not with the whole of his interior nature.

Thirdly, It permits heinous faults which impoverish character, and waste the heart of man. Thus, a man may be a moral man who is peevish, morose, fretful. God permits nettles among vegetables, but he does not permit them among men; and yet, there are men and women who are nettles, every leaf of which is covered with poisonous spines so minute that the eye does not detect them. If you put your hand where they are, they sting or burn it as if a fever had seized it. There are those whose very presence seems to turn the air to distemper. They are themselves unhappy, and they breathe out unhappiness, and make all unhappy around about them. They avenge their discontent upon other people. They may be persons of great probity, and, in some sense, of honor, and of entire morality so far as eating and drinking are concerned; and yet their minds may be full of mischief and unhappiness-making; and there is nothing in morality that disallows it. Men say of them, "What an unfortunate disposition! and what a pity! But still, he is a moral man." A man may be a strictly moral man, and may be to a certain extent a respectable man, and may be an influential man, and may be in the church even, and yet in heart and feeling and dealing may be stingy in the extreme.

A man who is shut up in himself; who lives only to clasp himself in his own arms, to bring in whatever he can, and to give out as little as possible; and who thinks narrowly, and watches and restrains and retains, and is forever working inwardly, quietly, sometimes puts on a good name as a kind of veil; but after all, the inward center of his nature is stingy, mean, self-clasped, self-inclosed, self-contented, selfish. He is a respectable man. He belongs to a good family. He trains in the best circles. Yes, and he is a member of the church. Everybody speaks well of him—in a general way. Everybody speaks well of him at his funeral. That is the only place where wholesale lying is permitted. And yet this man may have violated the very temper and spirit of the Gospel of Christ, and the central idea of a generous manhood. But morality does not rebuke him. He is a moral man!

One may be avaricious, yea, and greedy, and all his life long his selfishness may inspire in him a lust for accumulation. He may be thoughtless of virtues, thoughtless of knowledge, thoughtless of spiritual inspirations, thoughtless of heavenly riches; but the lust of gain may burn in him as a fire. A man may have this weakness, and recognize it; but he passes as a very moral man, and he himself thinks he is a moral man. He says, "I do not lie; I do

not swear; I do not steal; I do not get drunk; I do not commit burglary; I do not commit assault and battery; I am not a troublesome citizen; I keep peace in the neighborhood." All these things are true; and yet, the man is intensely avaricious and greedy. And avariciousness is a quality that grows worse and worse with age. Some qualities are strong in youth, and naturally die out with age; but there are some qualities that increase with age, and avarice is one of them.

A man may be a moral man, and yet allow pride to dominate in him; to make him cold and unsympathetic; to make him haughty in the presence of his fellow men. A man may be a moral man, and yet may be uncharitable, cynical, bitter-tongued, swearing, scoffing. A man may be self-indulgent, he may use the whole world for his own good; and he may be careless of other persons' good: and yet he may be a moral man. A man's heart may be full of all secret iniquities, of all that pride engenders, and of all that selfishness gives rise to, so only that the evil in him is kept within certain bounds, and does not permit itself to express itself in certain ways which convention has forbidden. This is consistent with what is recognized as a moral state.

Fourthly, Morality aims to build up a man outwardly in his condition, but not inwardly in his character. It does not seek to develop one single spiritual grace. That is, a man may be a moral man who is neither gentle, nor amiable, nor meek, nor sweet-tempered, nor submissive to the will of God, nor reverential, nor prayerful, nor grateful, nor benevolent. And what must be a man's character when it is devoid of all those higher tendencies and developments? It accepts and is satisfied with the lowest developments of the human faculties. It aims at no higher spiritual unfolding, no nobler culture, no reaching after things beyond the sight. And,

Lastly, it leaves out, wholly, the world to come, and all the obligations which we owe to God, and all the relations which are established between the soul and the Saviour Jesus Christ. It leaves out religion. That is to say, it leaves out the higher forms of aspiration and of duty, and all that which faith brings within the circuit of our knowledge, and makes imperative.

Here, then, are the deficiencies of morality. I have said that in conduct, in its lowest form, it has its value; but I think you will now perceive that it cannot be a substitute for religion. And yet, men who have only morality, say, "What lack I yet?"

Says my vine, that has been growing now for eight years, and clambering up over the trellis and into the tree, "Do I need to grow any more? Am I not a stalwart vine already? Did you

ever see leaves that were better than mine are?" It looks over some of the neighboring vines—the Iona, the Delaware, and other choice varieties—and sees that they are small and covered with rust: and it says, "I never had rust on me like that. Those are your choice, famous vines, are they? Look at them. What are they worth? The leaves are bleared and wilted and early falling from mildew. Look at my great thick-lipped leaves." It runs up in the tree, and makes extra leaves, and they do not rust, and it looks down on these finer vines, and the little clusters, and small berries, and says, "See what a great vine I am!" Well, it is rank in the wood, and rank in the leaf; but there has not a grape grown on it since it has stood, and there will not one grow on it if it stands twenty years longer. And what is a grape-vine good for which has nothing but healthy leaves on it? Yet, is not good, healthy grape-wood a desirable thing? Are not healthy leaves very desirable on a grape-vine? Is it not desirable to have the leaves of a grape-vine free from mildew? It is not on account of what this grape-vine has that we reject it, but because it is deficient in those higher qualities which should make it what it was meant to be, and because it prides itself on the possession of lower and humbler developments.

I do not say that not stealing, and not swearing, and not drinking, are not good things; but if you suppose that a plant is to have nothing but ground-leaves, you are mistaken. Where is the fruit? Where are the clusters? Where are the finer traits of spiritual excellence? You were born for something more than negatives—for something more than those virtues which consist in not doing evil. You were born in the image of God. And as he is Creator, something of his creating nature resides in you, as it does in every part of humanity. It is for you to develop the higher forms of manhood, and not to rest content with the lower forms. If you knew no better, you scarcely could be charged with dishonor, but since you do know better, it is dishonorable in you to live so far below that which God intended you should become.

But even looking at it in this light, let no man be discouraged. Do not understand me as saying, because I think you ought to be born again of the Spirit, and because I believe divine grace will produce richer and rarer fruit than ever can come from an unregenerated nature, that you throw away everything. If you have nothing better than morality, keep that by all means.

If my child should come to me with coarse and rude garments, I should not hesitate to say to him, "My son, be clothed with better"; but the request that he should be clothed with better gar-

ments does not imply that the garments he has on are good for nothing. If he were dressed in linsey-woolsey, that would be better than nothing; though broadcloth would be still better. Even linsey-woolsey would be better than leather; but I would have him wear leather rather than that he should wear something worse. And if it was a garment that but half covered the body, it would be better than a cincture of leather round the waist. But even a cincture of leather worn about the waist would be better than nothing at all.

Now, if an Indian, with a fragmentary dress, should present himself as a full-dressed man before you, would you deride the idea that he was properly clad? Would you have him throw away the little he had before he got more? Complete dress is what one wants; but is nothing short of that of any value?

I do not say to the young, "These moralities are of no value to you." They are of great value to you. Truth-speaking, fidelity, industry, cleanliness, punctuality, frugality, enterprise—these are real excellences. Have these at least. Have these anyhow. But will you be content with these? Is there not something in every human soul which has the touch of inspiration in it, and which leads it to aspire to something more than these qualities, which belong to the undeveloped mass of mankind?

Morality is not in any sense, then, a substitute for spiritual religion, any more than industry and frugality are substitutes for patriotism. Every man ought to be frugal and industrious; but many are frugal and industrious who have no patriotism. A man may be very neat, and neatness is a good quality; yet, when he is attacked he may be a coward, and run out at the back door, and leave his wife and children to take care of themselves. Neatness, though it is a good quality, is no substitute for a man's fidelity to those who are under his trust. And so, in regard to the lower forms of morality, they are meritorious and excellent; but they are not all that you need.

"Well, then," you will say, "What about those qualities when a man dies? A man has been industrious, and frugal, and honest, and moderately truth-speaking all his life long; and when he dies, and goes to judgment, what is to be done with these qualities which you say are good?" A man undertakes to jump across a chasm that is ten feet wide, and jumps eight feet; and a man says, "What is going to be done with the eight feet that he did jump?" Well, what is going to be done with it? It is one of those things which must be accomplished in whole, or it is not accomplished at all. A man lets out an anchor from a ship, and it goes to within a fathom

of the bottom, but it does not touch ; and a man says, "Is it not good as far as it goes?" How good is an anchor that does not touch the bottom? A man frames a building, and makes his mortises and tenons so that they come within an inch of fitting ; and when he is reproached for his unskillful work, he says, "It is good as far as it goes." And how good is that? Men say, "We have all these minor qualities; we have these lower moralities: are they of no benefit to us?" Yes, they are of benefit to you now ; they are of benefit to you in a thousand ways in this world ; but they do not constitute that character which is to fit you for the world to come. They do not go to make the golden key which unlocks those mysteries of love which you have need of. These minor qualities are not a substitute for it. You go forth an ungrown spirit ; you go forth with lower leaves without the bloom and the fruit ; and the lower is no substitute for the higher.

Moreover, out of every one of these lower states, if we did but know it, may be developed, by the divine grace, that which shall bring forth the true spiritual life. If you know enough to take one step, take a second. If you know enough to recognize law and obligation, and that low sense of character which is required by society, you have that foundation on which moral government itself rests, and you know enough to go on from step to step, and from strength to strength, and develop out of your lower knowledges higher attainments. Spirituality is only the normal and legitimate development of men in their higher forms, divinely inspired, divinely led, and divinely blessed. It is God that works in those who work out their own salvation. It is the divine co-operation and guiding influence that works upon your mind ; and out of this joint working come all the grace, all the hope, all the faith, all the sweet fruition of love, the sense of immortality, and the longing for it, which we experience. And whatever is just, and true, and pure, and sweet, and of good report, upon earth, and in the heavenly circle—all this comes, to be sure, by the grace of God ; but it comes by the grace of God through the development of your own faculties, and through your own striving.

I beseech of you, then, look not simply to the duties which come between you and your neighbor. You have other obligations. I beseech you, look not simply to the natural and lower forms of virtue. Brothers, sisters, friends, God is your father, and all heaven is the household that belongs to you ; and your affections should not spend themselves here in the lower forms of life, but should take hold of that higher and nobler intercourse. Intercourse between your soul and the Invisible should be begun and carried forward, that it may be perfected in the heavenly land.

I preach, therefore, to all of you, with earnestness, exhorting you to cleanse and purify that which now is, in the trust that it may make it easy for you to live a manly and noble life, by opening your soul to the Spirit of God—that atmosphere which, when it enters the soul, makes all things comparatively easy, and easier and easier, until the last great day of fulfillment.

My dear young friends, you cannot be too true, too honorable, too frugal, too industrious, too noble, in all the things which society requires of you. But oh! do not stop there, as if you had reached your manhood. You were made for something more. Your manhood is not accomplished when you are a good merchant. You ought to be a good merchant; but you ought to be more than that. You have not fulfilled your destiny when you are a good lawyer. You should fill up that measure; but you should overflow and go far beyond that. You should do what the law requires; but the man who does not do more than that is an insignificant and ignoble-spirited man. All these things ought ye to do; but something higher yet remains. Your manhood should bloom and blossom with that which is far higher than the public sentiment requires, or than the laws and customs require, when it reaches God's law, and takes hold of the higher and nobler conceptions of virtue and piety and duty.

So I beseech of you, do not stop until you feel the throb and pulse of a new life. Be born again. Take a new departure. Let the horizon of your ambition no longer be on a level, but high up where Christ and heaven are. This is your privilege.

And I pray you, begin early. I pray you, begin now, if it is too late to begin early. I pray you, even if you stand hovering on the very verge of the grave, *begin!* It is not too late. Begin to live for God and for immortality. So you shall find that you are living, in the highest sense, for yourself, for honor, for happiness, and for an undying manhood.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Father, conscious of our inferiority. Though we know not thy greatness, nor can compass infinity by our thought, yet we know that thou art transcendent above all human excellence. Thou art sitting enthroned in glory, beheld, adored, loved, by all that are with thee. We are far from thee, and yet hampered with the flesh, and with undiscerning eyes. We are used to things material; but to rise into the invisible realm, and to discern the things that are there, is not within our power. By faith only can we apprehend thee; and yet, thou hast been pleased to make thyself so far known to us that in hours of distress and darkness thou hast been our whole support. Thou hast revived our fainting spirits. Thou hast filled our souls with the light of hope and cheer. We have taken hold of thee as if thou hadst been visibly present; and though no voice has saluted our outward ear, our hearts have heard thee speaking unto us. Thou hast forgiven our sins. Thou hast called us in the confidence of love back unto thee. Thou hast made us to know thee. Thou hast made us to know that thine anger was turned aside, and that in thy heart were purposes of peace and of mercy. We have rejoiced in thee, and have found thee a present help in time of trouble. We have known thee as a God of help to those around about us. To thee have we borne our children. To thee have we brought our friends. To thee have we gone seeking sympathy for the distressed and for the outcast. In days of darkness, when wicked men bore rule, and all was tribulation and disorder, and thy law was trodden under foot, thou didst hide us in thy pavilion, and give us hope to believe in a better time to come, and patience to wait for it. We rejoice in all the plenitude of past mercy, and in the encouragement which it gives us to address thee in the future. And yet, our guilty fears, our unbelieving hearts, pull us down. How often do we come mourning because God has hidden his face; and when troubles come upon us, we are as those who have never beheld the deliverance of the Lord; and still we fret out our days which might be days of composure, and call our burdens unbearable. And still we more and more repine in the midst of mercies.

O Lord, forgive our unbelief, our want of trust, and clothe us in the spirit of child-like faith and confidence. May all thy words seem to us Yea and Amen. And we pray that thou wilt grant that in time to come we may dwell more by the power of faith. With thee above the cloud, above the storm, above the reach of the fowler and of his arrow—there, under the shadow of thy wings, may we find perfect peace.

Draw near, we beseech of thee, to any disturbed in heart and conscience, and speak peace to them. Bring them to that submission which shall secure peace.

We pray for those who are wandering; for those who are in darkness; for those who have hardened their hearts; for those who have turned back from knowledge; for those who have put far away the instructions of their youth; for those who have gone astray into wicked ways. O Lord God, we pray that the time past may be sufficient for them. Revive thy powerful influence around about them. And if they must needs have help to break away from the snares and enthrallments that beset them, give forth, we pray thee, thy strength for them. And if there be those who with slippery feet climb the steep hill, often sliding back, grant, we pray thee, that they may not give up hope nor courage, but struggle yet to the end. And crown their efforts with victory.

We pray for those who are weary and heavy laden; upon whom thou

art laying, from day to day, thy burdens. Give them strength. We pray that they may never feel forsaken of God. May the light of thy countenance fall upon their path, and may they trust in thee, and find in thee a substitute for all earthly mercies.

We pray for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. May they be filled. May we all be taught to aspire, and by the way of knowledge seek a higher life, and that rest which is in thee, and not in us. We pray that thou wilt grant unto these disturbed and troubled hearts of ours that simple and child-like rest which at last shall give us peace in believing.

We beseech of thee, grant that thy Word may spread everywhere. May thy churches be revived. May thy servants who preach the Gospel be clothed with new strength, and with light from on high. We pray for the reformation of morals in all our land. We pray that intelligence may be disseminated, that our laws may be purified, and that our magistracy may be incorrupt. May men who fear God be appointed to rule over us, and may all the earth see thy salvation. Let thy promises be fulfilled. Bring in Jew and Gentile. Let the fullness of the earth be as the fullness of the sea.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt follow with thy blessing the word of exhortation. Enlighten those whose eyes are darkened. Stir up the hearts of those who are indifferent and careless. Release those who are thrall'd by care, who are overtaken by temptations, and who are swept out of the stream of life and duty. We pray for all those who need the quickening of thy life. Breathe upon them. And may they from step to step advance until they stand in Zion and before God. We ask these mercies for ourselves and others, not in our own name, but for the sake of the Beloved; to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

WHAT IS SALVATION ?

I will read in the first chapter of Ephesians, from the fifteenth verse to the end :

“ Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.”

This is Paul's recapitulation of the topics of his prayer for the disciples of Christ. I have selected it because it is eminent in two respects—as giving an exalted view of the work of the divine Spirit in the human soul in this world, and as giving a large and sublime intimation of what religion means in the heart of man. I have selected it, also, as giving, in pre-eminent words which are dim, I might say, with undisclosed glory, a conception of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to effect in men that character which is so exalted, so rich, so noble, in this transporting vision of the apostle. The two grand ideas unfolded here are the recapitulation, as a statement from the apostle, of what he had been accustomed to do for the followers of Christ since he heard that they had come into discipleship; and of the destiny of man as revealed in Christ Jesus, Christ himself being the supreme influence and power by which that destiny was to be accomplished. Great as the work is, impossible as it seems to nature, and absolutely impossible as it is to unaided human power, being a vision of poetry—almost a rhapsody of transcendental prophecy—yet, when it is coupled with the majesty and might of Christ as representing the fullness of God's loving power, it becomes not only possible, but certain, and is the theme of unbounded joy in anticipation, as it will be the theme of transcendent joy in inheritance.

The development of the human character (a theme most fit at this period of the world's history, when so much is being learned about the past of men, when such humiliating disclosures are being made, and when there is so much that leads men gladly to look away from their origin), is a subject which may well deserve our consideration. The character of man originally is poor indeed. His average condition upon the globe is such as not particularly to attract our admiration. The feebleness of men in every part—in reason, in emotion, in moral sentiment—is apparent. The race as discriminators of that which is right; as knowing how to obey even the lowest cycle of laws, the material; and as knowing how to obey social and civil and spiritual laws—does not present a spectacle which it is pleasant to contemplate. As you rise step by step along these graded cycles of law, the comparison becomes more and more painful. Nor will the best specimens, under the best conditions, and with the longest development, bear too close a scrutiny. For human life is made up of infinite weaknesses. It is partially developed here and there. It yet lies in solitude in many places. As in some parts of a new country there are clearings on which remain the stumps of the original trees, and as these clearings are surrounded by the rank wilderness, so spots here and there in men's nature are partially developed, and the rest lies yet uncultivated.

Now, to look upon the race of men, and to predict that they are to come into a condition in which they shall be perfect in every faculty and harmonious in all their relations, seems like the dream of a poet run mad with hope; and yet such is the destiny that is pointed out in the New Testament ideal of men. Whatever may have been their origin, there is a process by which they are coming up to manhood. Whatever may have been disclosed concerning them, there is a creative method by which they are to become *men*. Whatever may be the discriminations between the different portions of the human race, as to which is highest and which is lowest; whatever may be thought in respect to men as denizens of this world, or as citizens of any part thereof, or as agents or factors of creation, there is no doubt in respect to their future as spiritual beings, as citizens of God's great household, the universe. Whether it be true or not, I do not propose now to argue, although it seems to me that an argument might be constructed on this point; but no man, supposing it to be true, will wish to resist its truth.

It seems to me that the most transcendent vision any one can look upon is that vision which is opened up in Christ Jesus of the condition and destiny of the human race in the ages which are yet

to come, when they shall have been clothed in the virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ, and perfected, and brought home to the far-off spheres where perfection shall be consummated, and where we shall know what it is to be the sons of God. "It doth not appear," as the apostle significantly said, "what this means." We are sons of God, but what it is to be sons of God we do not yet know. There is something hidden under that title which man may not know till he attains. For there are no types of experience, and there are no sides of human knowledge which shall throw light on the full meaning of what it is to be a partaker of the divine nature. There are glimpses of what it may be for one to be possessed of perfect intuitional reason. All men, I suppose, sometimes have hours in which they *see*, not *think*. There are those who in certain directions are luminous; and they seem to be universal seers.

The time is to come, I suppose, when all men will dwell in this higher sphere, though probably with conditions and gradations. This dull light which burns as an oil-lamp wick burns, is to glow brighter than the light of the stars or than the sunlight. We are to be partakers of the divine nature.

Among the things which are most developed among men are the social affections. These act with every variation in the household, and with a diminishing ratio as the distance increases from *ego*—from self. But the time is coming when that love which we now see in this world—the noblest love that exists between motherhood or fatherhood and childhood—is to be disclosed in all directions, so that men shall find their whole nature irradiated, ennobled; all their life, so to speak, being filled with golden streams which run through it as from a perennial fountain. The time is coming when these dull and obscure affections, which are so often cast aside, or so often used only in single instances, or so often employed as if they were medicines and not food, shall be developed. When every part of men's social nature shall be developed in symmetry and harmony, the soul that loves will be a very different creature from that which we yet have known here—as different as a single bell is from a chime of bells, or as a whistle is from an organ.

We are to be not only sons of God, and partakers of the divine nature, but we are to be *heirs* with Christ to the eternal inheritance which he has with God. And to be a co-heir is to be equal. We are to walk with equal foot-steps, side by side with him. The distance between us and Jesus he is to annihilate by the development and growth which he works in us. And though we are not to partake of the divine nature in the sense of infinity, we are to partake of it in the sense of quality, and with such significant power that we shall be companions with God walking step by step with him.

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you."

Christ saith to his disciples, "I have made you my confidential friends"; and that which to them was true, is to be true to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This work cannot be consummated in this world. It can only be begun here. We see the seeds of it. We see its germs and pointings. The future opens to us as a realm of transmutation, of growth and development, transcendent above anything that we know on earth. The apostle; the most inspired of the apostles; the one most fit to be inspired; the noblest when inspired; in many respects the greatest nature that ever lived among men—Paul, with all his visions, with all his experience, with all that he had of the grace of God wrought out in him—stands looking into the other life, and says, "We know it only like a speck; we know it only in spots, here and there." So rich, so radiant, so glorious is the heavenly sphere, that when the apostle who had been in the seventh heaven, and seen things which it was not possible to utter, stood again among men, and looked into the sphere above, the height, the depth, the length and the breadth of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, and the power of his redeeming love, were such that he said, "We know in part. What we see here compared with what I saw there, is, as what my childhood was compared with what I am now since I have become a man."

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

The earth changes. Much that in this world seems to us radiant and glorious is relative, and passes away. We read that the things which are transient are to be shaken down, and that the things which are permanent, which belong to everlastingness, are to remain unshaken. The apostle says that intellect, great as it is, will be transcended; that knowledge, much of it as can be accumulated here, and important as it really is, will be thrown into the shade, by and by; that when we come to know things as they are, what we think we know now will hardly be as much as a punctuation point in an encyclopedia. Prophecies shall cease, and learning shall cease. All those things shall cease which men think are of so much value. Only three things will remain—hope, love, faith, Essential, emotive soul-qualities, which are the marrow and substance of manhood in distinction from animalhood—these things will remain. And about these, as a center, will be gathered all those things which go to constitute the mind of man. These go on in the other life; and there they will far transcend what they

are here. So glorious shall we be there that what we are here shall seem as nothing. And as the apostle stood and looked into that future, he said, "I am a child." He, the chiefest of all the apostles, and the noblest of the many inspired men of his time, or of any time, declared that he had but just begun to learn what was in store for him.

If I go to one who is scant of flowers, and carry in from the prairies an armful of blossoming beauty, he looks upon it with rapture, and says, "Where did so many flowers come from?" If I go to a poor garret-born or cellar-bred creature who never has been where flowers are raised, to one who has seen only single flowers, or to one whose nearest idea of vegetation is that of tobacco, and carry a beautiful bouquet to him, he looks upon it, and says, "Oh! How wonderful!" But I say to him, "You do not know anything about flowers. Come and ride with me day in and day out, knee deep in them, over the grand prairie, and then tell me if you think this handful amounts to anything."

The man with an experience rich as the apostle's was; the man whose developments, whose traits of character, and whose life were pre-eminent for their likeness to the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet said, "It all goes for nothing." We are children. We do not understand what we shall be when that which is perfect is come. That which is relative is to pass away. So great and noble and transcendent and pure and beautiful will be the disclosures of the future, so resplendent will heaven be, when we get there, that all we knew of earthly hope, will, as we look back upon it, scarcely seem to be a germ of that which we shall then realize.

Look at this acorn. How small it is! I can pocket it, and a dozen like it. I can carry it on my little finger. I can snap it. A child might sling it. And when it has grown a year or two it is a mere whip. A boy might uproot it. But let it grow through a hundred years, under the influence both of summer storms and of winter blasts, as well as of the mellow light and warmth of the sun and the sweet and refreshing nourishment of the rains; let it be toughened and made rugged by the changing seasons through a century; it will become an immense outspreading tree: and yet this acre-covering oak which is the product of that acorn is hardly a simile of the products of the world to come compared with the seed-forms of this life. For heaven is wider, infinitely, than the growths of this horizon. They are not to be measured by the growths of this winter sphere.

Now, Christ is not revealed as a heavenly fetich such that if you only believe in him you will by some mysterious arrangement, some superstitious influence, be drawn up and saved at last.

Christ is not revealed, either, as a philosophical problem; but if half the strength which has been exerted to dissect the nature of Christ and fix his place in the divine government, had been expended in discovering the truth of Christ born in you, the hope of glory; if this vast intellectual dialecticism had been inspiration or prophecy drawing the soul toward Christ as a Lover and a sympathizing Friend, how the heavens would by this time have blazed with that name which is above every name! But we turn aside to analyze and reconstruct; and thus the moral and spiritual strength of men, and the church itself, has been thrown away.

Neither is Christ revealed in the New Testament as a mere ideal of beauty which men may look upon, from the standard of art and poetry. There is that in him which ministers to faith. There is that in him which gives to superstition, even, some degree of warmth. There is that in him which ought to bewilder a poet with joy, and which ought to make prophecy spread its wings as an eagle that is soaring toward the sun.

But it is not this, nor this chiefly, that is disclosed to us. Christ is disclosed to us as the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is so related to the work of developing and glorifying the human race that he is all in all; that he meets every one of those wants in the soul which are necessary for that final disclosure of glory which is to bring us up into the presence of God, and make us what I have been describing as the possibility and reality of the future. He is the Architect, the Engineer, the Leader, the Guide, the School-master; he is the Friend; he is the Father and Brother; he is the Rescuer and Saviour; he is the great Artisan and Artist of all the things which are required for the education of the race, for the disclosure of the human soul, till it comes to its maximum power and beauty and symmetry and joyfulness in the heavenly land.

Here, then, is the prayer of the apostle. It is a most glowing representation of the dignity and grandeur of the human soul in its future, and also of the glory and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ as the instrument by which its destiny is to be wrought out.

I remark, in the first place, in view of this opening of the text, that we see herein the meagerness of the common ideas of religion. As it is usually regarded, it is a kind of insurance against hell, or a sort of guarantee or indorsement of heaven. I saw it stated, only last week, in a paper, "Mr. Beecher preaches manhood, whereas the Gospel preaches salvation." It is very true that I preach man in Christ Jesus. I am constantly endeavoring to augment a sense of manhood. I seek to inspire a higher ideal of the dignity and worth

of men. In one sense it is true that I do not preach salvation, but in another and grander sense I do preach salvation pre-eminently. I say that the road to salvation is *salvableness*. I say that an essential to salvation is that man shall be worth saving. And I preach that Jesus Christ by the divine power fashions men into that which he wants to save, and that we are made salvable by the work which is wrought in us. I, not preach salvation? What is the end and aim of my ministry but to inspire men with a most enthusiastic and ardent longing to be saved? How? As a sneaking thief would be saved who had dodged the sheriff and remained a thief still? As some drunken brute would be saved, wallowing in the sty, but eluding inspection and staggering into the house, and on his bed snoring the fumes of his drunkenness away? No, not unwashed; not ungrown; not unbeautiful. Salvation means to me transformation. It means the fire of the Holy Ghost burning out men's dross. It means inspiration, elevation of soul, God-likeness, Christ-likeness, heaven in you. Christ *in you*—that is salvation.

Salvation does not mean going where nothing can hurt you. It does not mean poor, beggarly hiding from storms. It is positive, energetic strength. It is manhood in magnitude. It is the power of God in the human soul. It is new life, new being. I, not preach that?

Oh! such a work as this—how different is it from routine experiences! A man is convicted that he is a sinner—and that is a good thing. He gets a hope—and that is a good thing. And afterward he says, "I have religion"—and that is a good thing, too. But he goes on for ten years, and is not a bit more generous. He is not a particle more soft or sweet. He is as obstinate as he always was. He is just as irritable and just as unspiritual as ever, understanding nothing that he cannot eat, or that he cannot see and handle; loving money as he always did. If you ask him the reason for the faith that is in him, he informs you that he was convicted once. He tells you what a time he had when he was convicted. And he says that ever since he has had a hope.

Far be it from me to say that these, as stepping stones toward real growth and development, are to be spoken lightly of or to be despised. Yet they are mere transient steps. If a person is brought into manhood sweeter, brighter, nobler and more divine, that is getting religion. It is becoming more and more like God.

There is a great want of liveness and joyfulness and liberty in the experience of average Christians. We are not doing what we were commanded to do. I notice that when men in New York would sell their flowers, they fill their windows

full of the most beautiful ones. As I came down Broadway the other evening, and passed the florists' shops, I saw vast bouquets, and vast piles of heliotropes, and rosebuds, and various other tempting flowers lying in the windows; and the sight of them made me wish to jump out, and run in, and get some of them. For they and I are cousins. They know me, and I know them; and I always like to stop and speak to them. I long for their companionship. But what if I had seen in those windows burdock, and bull-thistles, and all manner of ugly and hirsute and stinging nettles, should I have wanted to get near them?

What if some robustious Christians are always thundering out from their conscience censorious remarks about other people; what if other men are narrow and sharp and stringent in their faith; what if other men are oppressive and rigorous; what if other men are lean and gaunt like an empty sack; what if other men are like a plump barrel too much filled; what if there are all manner of characters that lack the Christian graces, does anybody, seeing their good works, want to glorify the Father which is in heaven? Do you suppose that when I see a frozen man I am warmed to glorify God? When I see men who profess to be religious, but whose life is devoid of the spirit of true religion, do not I say, with all my heart, "Deliver me from religion, if that is religion?" But if I see a man who knows how to do good; if I see a man who, doing good, does it from the love of doing it; if I see a man who, when reviled, reviles not again; if I see a man who is full of gentleness, and sweetness, and hope and faith, and who, when other men are alarmed, still goes about good, sweet, true, pure, loving, gentle, faithful to the end, I bow down at his feet, and say, "Where got you that spirit? Your God shall be my God." The gospel that we want to-day is the gospel of sweet manhood. We want a truly transparent gospel. We want a gospel that is translated. We want the gospel in its living forms.

Compare the average Christian life with those transcendent views of the glorification of human nature which are contained in the gospels—especially in those interpretations of the gospels, the epistles. How such a comparison rebukes the way in which we are living as Christian men! How far does it show us to be coming short of the duties which Christianity imposes upon us! But the work of Christianity we cannot see in full. It is a work which is largely in the future, though some of it is here.

Do you recollect going out into Prospect Park in Brooklyn when they were first laying it out? They were going to have a great park; and it *is* a great park. It is one of the most beautiful parks

in the world, and you ought to be more proud of it than you are. But how did they go to work to make it? What did they do first? They took off everything that was beautiful from the surface, and heaped it in large stacks. They took off the sod and threw up the sub-soil, and the ground was like a man that had been skinned all over. It was ugly and hideous. By and by, however, there were some little bits improved. They spread out some soil, and put in some shrubs, and some small points here and there were made quite attractive. And they followed up this process little by little. The great bulk of the park, so far as its surface was concerned, was to be created; and here came out a bit, and there a bit, from year to year; and people said, "It is beautiful as far as it goes."

Men grow just so when God takes hold of them, and they begin to be Christians. The old growths are cleaned away, and transformations take place under the divine influence. Oftentimes a man looks less beautiful after the work of grace has first begun in him than he did before; but gradually his nature changes. In some directions it improves. One part after another begins to be wrought out by the divine discipline, and by the concurrent desire of men for education. Little by little the lineaments of the divine character come up. But the whole of it cannot appear until you get into a climate that is without winter. This is such a world that the highest degrees of human excellence cannot be attained until we get out of it. The lower forms, the foundation elements of the great structure, which require a certain physical manipulation, are begun and carried forward here; but as plants that are grown in green-houses are not taken out of doors until winter is gone, and have their glory in summer, so in this green-house of a world, as it were, we are sprouted; and it is not until summer dawns on this sphere, and we are transplanted to a soil where frosts no longer come, that we show all the power and beauty of our character.

So grand a plan demands an Architect and an Artist who is competent to carry it out. When you preach the doctrine of our dependence upon God in a certain way, it discourages men; and yet I think there is a way in which dependence upon God may be preached so as to encourage them. If a man says, "You have no power, and God demands of you things that are impossible to you," and leaves it in that gaunt and dialectic state, my reason is offended. It looks like a charge of injustice against God. I revolt at it.

I proceed, we will suppose, to build me a house on my peaceful hill. I proceed to do it. I, with my pick-ax, dig the cellar, every

bit of it. *I* am able to do it, and wishing to be independent, *I* do it. *I* build the walls of the cellar, and carry the stones, all of them—*I* do it. *I* fix the mortar, and *I* put them in their places. *I* undertake to raise the whole frame. *I* prepare every timber, *I* saw every board, and *I* drive every nail. *I* undertake to build this house. And how long will it take me? There is but just one thing that *I* shall want when *I* get through, and that is another house about six feet long and two feet wide. *I* spend all my life building me a house, and *I* do it poorer than *I* could have it done for me. But *I* can build that house, provided *I* have an architect to give me a plan, and a contractor who will undertake to execute that plan, and who is competent to do it. And it will be *I* that build it. The work will be mine. It will be the result of my inspiration. It will be built by me, for my use. But *I* shall be able to do it because *I* have such enginery at my command, which works out my will.

I hear the voice of God saying, in the Bible, “Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling.” “Why,” *I* say, “it is too much. *I* can not do it.” “Work out your own salvation,” still sounds out to me. But these passions, these irregular appetites, which come and go as ocean tides—how can *I* control them? How can *I* stop those storms which rage on the Atlantic? How can *I* bring down those mountains which are so high, or bring up those valleys which are so low? How can *I* sweeten those affections which have been created in me? How can *I* from day to day keep those purposes steadfast which are fugitive as the mercury in the glass? How can *I* symmetrize every part of myself? In despair *I* say, “*I* cannot build that spiritual house.” Still the command is, “Work out your own salvation.” But, blessed be God, there is something more. “For it is *God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*” There is my hope. *I* have an Architect. *I* have a Contractor. *I* have a mighty Workman. *I* have all that which is necessary to enable me to accomplish what *I* undertake. Now *I* can build my soul-house. Now *I* can do all that needs to be done, whether it be in time or in the eternal sphere; for it is God that is making out the portraiture and plan, and it is God that has undertaken to carry forward that plan, and it is God that works in me to do what *I* am doing. Christ is all in all. In all personal power, he has adaptations to give us what we need. If it be reason that we need, there is the supply in Christ’s nature. If it be moral sense or sentiment that we need, Christ stands over against it as bread stands over against the mouth when the body is in need of food. Whatever we need

in social affections is provided for by the Spirit of the quickening God. When the will and purpose of men are right, and they attempt to work, everything is prepared for them.

This work is only begun in this world. The best man comes to his death without all this ripeness and glory that is described in the Bible. Men are discouraged, frequently, because they are not as good as persons that they read about in the Bible and in biographies; and one thing is very certain, that when a man is well dead and out of the way, he is a great deal better than he was before. Children that were torments to the whole neighborhood when they were alive—how glorious they are as they appear in Sunday-school books! And after men are once gone, what nobility dawns from them!

Partly this is illusive, and partly it is true. We do not see each other as we are. We do not use our best feelings as instruments by which to see the best things that are in our fellow-men. We use our worst feelings, and interpret the worst sides of those who are around about us. We are guilty of unequable judgments of persons with whom we have to do. And when they are gone, we make a new estimate; we take a new account of stock, and come to the conclusion that they were better men, all things considered, than we supposed they were. This "adulation of death," as it is sometimes called, proceeds from an amiable cause. Nevertheless, men, when they are once gone, are apt to be thought better men than while they yet lingered upon the earth. The best men are imperfect; but as an amusement, I have not the slightest objection to the contemplation of the doctrine of perfection on earth. It is a very pleasing recreation, and I do not know why it may not be indulged in sometimes as well as other recreations. It occupies time that might be worse spent. But the idea of perfection in this world belongs to another system of theology from that in which I believe—an old technical system; a commercial system; a system in which is marked out a line of attainments for men, the reaching of which entitles them to be called perfect. But if you take the spiritual notion of manhood, it is germinant, growing. It is not perfect until Christ is completely ripened in the soul—a thing which does not happen in this life. There is no such thing as perfection on earth. There may be approaches in that direction; there may be attainments which point thitherward; but as to perfection, the word does not belong to the Christian scheme in this sphere. We are but begun on earth. In the other world much will be dropped. Much will go with us which belongs to our present state of existence; but much will be left behind.

I do not suppose an old ship-master could see a vessel that has gone over the ocean with him time and again, and that he has had many a good time in, stranded and lying high and dry on the coast, open at every seam, and dropping to pieces, without feelings of sorrow; yet I am not unwilling to drop this old body of mine. It has been a good body to me. It has served me night and day. I have made many pleasant voyages in it. But, after all, it has been a body of death to my soul; and it has hindered me. There has been a sharp contest between the good and the bad. And when I rise to the sphere where there are no such material laws as there are in this world, acting on such material bodies as ours; when to eat and drink and sleep are things of the past, and nothing but a vital soul is left, and I have only a spiritual body, then I shall rejoice. Faithful as this body has been, I shall gladly bid it good-bye. I shall say, without regret, "Farewell, body of death: all hail, body of life!"

We are coming to that land in which we shall lay aside much that belongs to our present state. If you ask me, "What of this enginery is to be left behind?" I reply that I do not know. It is a matter of speculation purely. But whatever is relative will be shaken down before it passes beyond this world, and that which is permanent will remain in the other life. Much will perish, but much will last.

This world is to us as a nest. What is a nest to birds? It is the place where they are born, where they are bred, and where they are fledged. But when once a bird has been born, and has grown strong, and is winged, is the nest a place for him any longer? By as much as it was good for his helplessness, it is worthless for his strength. Now that the bird is developed, and can soar into the hemisphere above, it has no further need of a nest.

This world is good for a nest, but it is bad for a flying-place. It is a good place to be hatched in, but it is a bad place to practice one's wings in. If a man has power to fly, he does not want to be confined to a nest. The glory and power of the eagle is never known while he lives on his cliff—not till he has abandoned that, and sought his new home.

This, to me, casts a cheering light on the matter of dying and death. Death to me is a gate of pearl. It is Milton's "golden gate on golden hinges turning." Dying is more than going home to God. It is more than going home to friends and friendship. It is also going home to find out what we ourselves are. It is going home to find our soul-self. It is going home to our true nature. It is enfranchisement.

There are in many a dungeon, to-day, men who have been there, unsunned, for years and years, down deeper than the roots could go. There, in their unventilated prison, vermin-covered, chilled, and almost bereft of reason itself, they drag out a miserable existence. But suppose their prison-doors should be thrown wide open, and they should be called, by some liberating army, as the Italians were, to leave their dungeons, would they think it a misfortune? Would they count liberty to be a burden, and the chance to be free again a thing to be wept about? And we, that are of the earth, earthy; we that are of the flesh, fleshly; we that are infants undeveloped; we that have a thousand germinant points, beginnings, almost none of which are grown; we that are waiting, not for the redemption of the body, but for redemption from the body—for the enfranchisement of the spirit—shall we speak of death gloomily? Shall we count those unfortunate who have gone through the gate of death? All hail! sweet children, who know not the storm nor the winter, but who from out of the warmth of the mother's arms have stepped, at one sweet moment, into the warmth of the Saviour's love. All hail! those who are called in the midst of the battle of life to go to a higher sphere, and to the exaltation of nobler functions. Ye who are from day to day growing weaker, and who seem to go on your way with striving, are still declining in the path, look up and thank God. The night is almost spent to you. Do you see the dawn in the east? and do you know the meaning of that sky? It is heaven. It is immortality.

These views encourage men, instead of discouraging them. I should be discouraged if I felt that all these advantages in life depended on me, or that they were the result of my fidelity in such a sense that every mistake I made would be a mistake whose full weight would rest upon me. But when I think that what I am I am by the grace of God, and that his grace will be ministered to me in the time to come, and that I shall be, not what I am able to attain by my own powers, but what I am able to attain by my strength and wisdom guided by sovereign strength and wisdom, I am encouraged.

More than that, brethren, in these views it seems to me we have that equipoise which we need in the disappointments and afflictions and besetments of life. If a man is going to his treasure, to his life, to his honor and glory, why need he complain of the fare on the way, even though it may be poor?

A man receives a message from Europe, informing him that an uncle of his has died leaving him a hundred and twenty thousand

pounds sterling; and he throws off his apron, and says to the old hammer, slinging it in the corner, "Lie there;" and he says to the bellows, "I don't blow you any more;" and he bids farewell to the shop where he has toiled for so many long years, and puts on his best clothes, and starts for New York to take passage for his fatherland. But the weather is dry, and the car is dusty; and suppose the conductor should find him crying because it was so dusty, and because he had nothing to eat, and because, on the whole, the cars jolted so, and because, the train being delayed, he had lost an hour or so? Think of a man whining in that manner on his way to a fortune! It would be impossible. You could not do anything to that man to make him complain. He says to himself, all the time, "I am going to England to get a fortune—half a million." If you listen to his heart, you will find that he is saying, "I am worth half a million, half a million, half a million." Every clock that he sees ticks, "Ducats, ducats, ducats; dollars, dollars, dollars." And what does he care for anything else? If a man insults him he hardly notices it, and says, "That man does not know who I am. He does not know anything about me." Elated and joyous, he goes through night and day, and takes everything that comes without a murmur, saying, "Soon I shall be in possession of my fortune; and what do I care for these little things?"

There is no treasure on earth like that which is laid up for us in heaven. There is no honor like that which surrounds that treasure in heaven. No friends on earth stand around the recipient of a great fortune like those friends, pure-handed and pure-hearted, who wait for our coming in heaven. They often come and look through to see how we fare. They stand on the battlements, in sympathy with all God's good universe, and see our warfare and doubts and discouragements, and call out to cheer us by the assurance of the reality of the heavenly life of manhood and joy, and say, "Come! come!" My father calls me to come. Through scores of years I have never ceased to hear the sweet soft voice of my mother saying to me, "Come!" My little children, with hands outstretched, call me, saying, "Come! Come!" and their voices fall as gently on my inward ear as the dew falls upon the flowers. Those that have labored with me, and have gone, say "Come!" The Father, the Spirit, and Jesus, say "Come!" And "let him that heareth say, Come! and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We believe, O Lord, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. We rejoice that there is a land without storms; where the sun shall not smite by day; where there shall be no waste and no destroying; where all things shall conspire to purity and goodness, and to joy therein. There thou dwellest. There thou art gathering those that are ripening in the far-off worlds. There thou art making the realm rich. Thither go from our midst multitudes. They have heard thy voice calling them, and they have felt the sacred impulse, and they leave behind all mortality, all that has been a load and a clog, a yoke and a burden, and rise through the inspiration of thy Spirit and thy drawing, into thy presence, to be as thou art, and to be with all that are garnered from ages gone by; with all that are noble in the princely estate of heaven. We thank thee that so many, beloved of us, are there. We thank thee that there is no bound to that realm. Nor need we fear that the multitude of those who flock thither shall dispossess those that come after them. We rejoice that so many footsteps that walked by our side now beat the heavenly plains; that so many who learned of us the lessons of life are gone before us to their reward, and to unite with those who from the walls of heaven cry out to us unceasingly, day and night, Come—come. We are coming, by years of sorrow, by joys, by our mistakes and downfalls, as much as by our victories. Plied on every side by thine influence, upheld by thee, guided by thee, still we pursue our way, and are tending evermore toward the land above. And we hope, by thy provident grace which hath thus far sustained us and made us what we are, to persevere, and to obtain the greetings of the celestial abode. Even so, Lord Jesus, breathe upon us the comfort of this hope and faith, that the brightness of the heavenly land may pierce the darkness which often surrounds us; that the certainty of our going there as the sons of God may take away from us the sense of sinfulness and weakness which oppresses us here upon earth.

Look, we beseech of thee, with compassion upon us all. If there be any whose sins hound them day and night, and pursue them relentlessly, O thou that art the Rescuer, deliver them from fear and anguish, and give them peace in thee. If there be those who are beclouded with doubts, and hindered on their voyage in the uncertain way, come to them walking upon the sea, and bid their storms to cease, and go with them in their ship to the very end.

We pray for all those who have tasted the bitter cup of trouble. Didst thou not put it to thy lips, though it was much to take, and though it surpassed human power? Didst thou not drink to the end, that the divine will might be accomplished? And if thou art putting to the lips of any of thy dear people a cup whose mixture is bitter, show them the hand which bears the cup, that they may see the mark of the nail. And show them thy pierced side, that they may see the mark of the spear. Thou that hast died for us, and art now living for us—thou dost not willingly afflict; and thou wilt cause all the troubles and sorrows which come upon us to bear abundant fruit, by and by, when we shall have been disciplined and exercised, to the glory of God. Sustain those who are weak and ready to perish, and those who are driven about by winds of fear, and those who are harassed by memories that will not sleep.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those who love thee. Fulfill toward them thine office and work. Keep them in thy thought evermore. Thou that art the Head over all, of which the church is thy body, what dost thou do but comfort those who are comfortless, and enlighten those who are in

darkness, and strengthen those who are perishing for lack of strength? Put thine arms about every one who needs thy support. Speak to every one his own name, that he may know that God means him. Hear the hearts that cannot utter their trouble, and do not even know what it is, but are distressed, and in pain, and are as they that dream, and strive to wake, and cannot.

O thou Deliverer, do thy work, not according to our skill or knowledge in asking, but according to thine own seeing, and according to thy tender mercies, and according to all the necessities which lie before thee as an open book.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us as a church. We thank thee for our union and fellowship together in years gone by. We thank thee for the hope of the future. And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt humble us under the mighty mercies of thine hand. May we not become proud or vain, nor in any wise lifted up. Wilt thou so open to us a sense of what we are, of how far we are from thee, and of the grandeur of thine influence in eternal life, that we may be kept from swelling pride and from faults of vanity. We pray that thou wilt grant a spirit of new life and new love-labor to this people. May they be more painstaking and diligent and enterprising in the work of Christ Jesus. And may they labor for men in season and out of season. We pray that those who have begun in the Christian course may be prospered in their journey heavenward, and that those who are wanderers abroad may be brought back again, and that those who are adversaries may become friendly.

Bless, we beseech of thee, all those who are in households—parents who are troubled for their children, or who are carrying their burdens heavily. Bless those who teach from day to day, oppressed with the responsibility of those who are committed to their charge. Bless those who are called to transact business, whether it be public or private. May they be upheld by thee wherever they go. May they be guided by thy power to victory in whatever they undertake that is right.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon those who are afar off from us, in distant lands, or upon the sea, or in the wilderness. Wherever in thy providence they are, remember them, and grant exceeding abundantly more to them than we can ask or think.

We pray that thou wilt accept our thanks for life preserved, for union consummated, and for restored relations in this place between pastor and people. And we pray that all of us may be sanctified by thy goodness, led to repentance by thy mercies, softened and sweetened by thy divine influences, and prepared for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Bless, we pray thee, all thy churches, and all thy ministers and servants. May thy Word be spread everywhere. May the power of the Gospel elevate all men. We pray that intelligence and knowledge, accompanied by virtue, may spread, and that this land, and all lands, may be brought to a knowledge of Jesus the Saviour of the world.

And to thy name, Father, Son, and Spirit, shall be praise everlasting
Amen.

“AS TO THE LORD.”

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.”—COL. III: 22,23,24.

We are taught in the New Testament that human life and society, and the whole natural economy within which life and society are developed, are but a part of a greater system—a substantially moral system, of which God is himself the grand center; so that every part of this vast secular economy runs back and is related to the great Author, Inspirer and Conductor of it. It is true that men in their ignorance and folly have been accustomed to speak of the world as being at enmity with God; but looking at it in a large and philosophical view, there is no antagonism between secular things and things eternal; between the moral government of God and the physical government which obtains. All of them are part and parcel of one thing. We are subjects of a God whose realm is universal, and whose reign touches every living creature.

Jesus also taught that this system of human actions ran back, in effect, to him, and that all human actions might spring from him, as a grand fountain of motive; so that whatever other inspiration of human conduct there might be, it would have, either in co-operation or in correction, this supreme motive and influence; namely, its relation to God, who rules over the universal system under which we are living. In such a sense, we are taught, has Jesus identified himself as the manifestation of God; in such a sense does he stand as God; in such a sense is he related to the course of things, that all the acts of human life—the minutest and remotest parts of it—are acts bearing upon him.

The manufacturer in his office knows that through building after building filled with machinery, running out to the very first and rudest processes, every single act of every single operative, down to the last and lowest boy, has its direct commercial connection with him and his interest. There is not

one of the wheels that revolve of the ten thousand ; there is not a thread spun nor woven ; there is not a color mixed nor employed ; there is not a thing done by any of the hands working in his vast establishment, of whom there may be hundreds and even thousands, that is not related directly to his interest.

The whole economy of the globe is, as it were, but a small manufactory under the direction of God ; and there is not a single act performed in it which has not some relation to the thought, the feelings, the purpose of God. And he declares himself to be in a wonderful sense identified with everything that is going on in life, in one way or another.

I have read in your hearing to-night that surprising parable spoken by the Saviour, in which he represents all men as summoned at last in judgment. It is addressed especially to the Gentile world, rather than to the Jewish ; for, when it is said, " All nations shall be gathered before him," the original terms are those which are almost everywhere else translated *Gentiles*. It is alleged that when the race are gathered before him, and he puts them on trial, those who are blessed and invited to come, are invited and blessed because they have succored him in distress, and ministered to him with love-service and fidelity ; and in surprise they say, " When ? " They are not conscious of having seen the Crowned One. And the reply is, " I was hidden in every little child ; in every poor abandoned person ; in every unfortunate wretch ; in every human creature that needed sympathy and patience and forbearance and help ; and when you did it to them, you did it to them, to be sure, but you did it to more than them—you did it to me, too." On the other hand, those who are rejected are rejected because they have lived selfishly and self-indulgently, and so have not ministered to him in his distress ; and in surprise they say, " When saw we thee necessitous, and did not minister to thee ? " And he replies, " Every time you neglected an act of humanity ; every time you were cruel and selfish and remorseless toward your fellow-men, you neglected me, and were cruel and selfish and remorseless toward me. For I was behind the beggar. I was behind the prisoner. I was behind the child of shame. I was identified with the street-walker. I was within every heart that throbbed with pain, and within every soul that was darkened for want of knowledge. It was me that you insulted—not them alone. Through them you wronged me. Every act that you performed was performed not upon them alone, but through them upon me."

Now, making every allowance you please for parabolic teaching, you cannot avoid (and who should wish to avoid it?) the fact that

Jesus has identified himself with human life—with the whole course of man's conduct; so that what we do at all, we do not do merely with reference to the thing that incited it. We act doubly in every important deed of our life. And it is the thing itself, or the person toward whom it is performed, that is indissolubly associated with the process which we adopt. "As you have done it to these," Christ says, "you have done it to me, too;" and on this ground he exhorts men, saying, "Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Hence it is taught that there is a personal service in the most unlikely things. That is what man needs; because that is the most powerful stimulus the human soul can receive for development. Of all the motives or things in this world, there is nothing that moves men so effectually as the living creature. We are a thousand times more influenced by living forces in men, than we are by the agencies of nature, or by things which we have, or which we seek. There is no stimulus comparable to that which springs from an active, living soul upon living souls.

But there are ten thousand parts of human life which seem to be hidden from men's vision. A child feels the stimulus of the father's hand and the mother's heart, and finds it easy to do right things at home. But let that child be sent away among strangers, and when unwelcome tasks are imposed upon him, he often falls off and fails, because he is removed from all the things that he cares for, and the motive to do disagreeable things, to take up heavy burdens, to perform duties that are difficult, and to be consecutive, persevering and enduring in noble and right courses, is gone. Many and many a man at home is like a flower in a greenhouse, where there is moisture in the air, and where moisture is administered to it by the hand of the gardener; but a man away from home, on the other hand, is like a plant that is turned out into the blazing sun, and is without care, and is dried up both in stem and root.

As this personal power is the most natural and universal and continuing, and as it makes the tasks and difficult places of life easier, so it is provided for in the moral government of God, in this respect: that there is no one single position in which a man can be put by the divine providence; there are no duties that can be made incumbent upon him; there are no tasks that he can be required to take up; there are no sufferings that he may be called to endure; there are no self-denials that he may be expected to practice,—which have not Christ in them. It is not simply for yourself, it is not merely for your own pleasure, that you do the things which go to make up a Christian life; it is for Christ.

There could be no more striking illustration of this given than that which is contained in the text, where it says, "Servants" (*slaves* it is in the original. *Slaves* is generic; *servants* is specific)—"servants, obey in all things your masters." The time has come, I suppose, when we can afford to be honest with texts; and if we give a true rendering to this one, we shall read it thus: "Slaves, obey in all things your masters." And then is added, "*according to the flesh.*" In another place it is said, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord." That relationship is established in the universal economy of God. The obligation stands in God, in the Lord. It is nature, and therefore it is right. It is nature, and therefore it is grace, in the higher sense of the term. The apostle says to slaves, "Obey in all things your masters *according to the flesh*"; that is, those who are physically, but not morally, your masters; those who are your masters not by right, but in nature as things have happened. "Obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers"; not working when they are looking at you, and shirking when they are not looking at you, saying, "We do not owe them any service." A man cannot afford to be unfaithful under any circumstances. A man cannot afford to be mean at any time. A man cannot afford to do less than his best at all times and under all circumstances. No matter how wrongfully you are placed, and no matter how unjustly you are treated, you cannot, for your own sake, afford to use anything but your better self, nor to render anything but your better service. And certainly you cannot when you consider that it is to the Lord that you are acting.

Still further, the apostle goes on to command that slaves shall obey their masters "in singleness of heart"—with simplicity, honesty, directness—"fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, [putting your heart in it] as to the Lord, and not unto men."

A grinding old fellow he is that you are bound out to. He stints you in your bread and your meat. He clothes you in the worst possible manner. He gets you up at the earliest hour, and keeps you up till the latest. He drives you out to your labor. He overworks you through the weary passages of life. He is a penurious old hunk, coining your very blood. And you say, "It serves him right if I do cheat him." Yes, it serves him right, but it serves you wrong, and it serves God wrong. You cannot afford to cheat a cheater. You cannot afford to lie to a liar. You cannot afford to be mean to a mean man. You cannot afford to do other than deal uprightly with any man, no matter what exigencies may exist between him and you. No man can afford to be anything

but a true man, living in his higher nature, and acting from the noblest considerations.

If you say, "It is not in human nature to do these things," then it must be in divine nature. If you say, "I cannot, nobody can, find reason for doing them after such provocation," then do them, as the apostle directs that you should, "as to the Lord, and not unto men."

There is more emancipation in this than you have any idea of. If you take a man at the lowest point; if you take him where he is, as it were, a mere lump of earth, it is very easy for you to mold him—almost as easy as it is for the potter, having put a lump of clay on his wheel, to mold it as he will. At first a man is nothing but a bundle of brute forces; but inspire him, and let him begin to have lines of spirituality and immortality struck through his lower nature, and it begins to augment, and becomes larger and larger in the hands of him that handles it. The smaller it is the easier it is to manage; and the larger it is the more difficult it is to manage; but as it expands it becomes more and more radiant. And gradually as it becomes filled with nobler thoughts and aspirations, it becomes a creature that yearns for another and a higher sphere. And after it has had long culture in things spiritual, it gives signs and tokens of divinity. Then no man can make a slave of it. He cannot hold it.

Why is it that eggs will hatch, and that the birds cannot prevent it? They have warmth brooding upon them, and nature swells in them. The reason why the shell gives way is the largeness of that which is in it. It is growth that emancipates men. It is easy to keep men down where they started, who have not begun to grow; but if you put a tree that is alive and growing even in the sidewalk and under the curbstone, though the stones may eat into it, and retard its growth, it will force its way out and up. You cannot long control and deal unjustly with that which is noble, beautiful and right. There is an inherent power in virtue, and truth, and dignity, and manhood, and fear of God, and love of man; and if you are a slave in the economy of human life, if you have a master according to the flesh, though not according to God, and if he be a hard master, and treat you wickedly, the worse he is, the better do you be. You cannot take yourself out of his hands in any way so quick as by making yourself so large that he cannot handle you. It is soul-goodness that makes it hard to oppress men. There is many a foot that will tramp the dusty ground, unbeautiful, homely, without a thought; but there are very few, not even excepting ragged and degraded boys, who will

not hesitate to put their foot on a bed of flowers. Rather than soil such beauty they will keep in the alley and go around. And in life there are many men who will treat vulgarly the vulgar, and brutally the brutal, but who, when they meet that which they are satisfied is good, will treat it not rudely nor disdainfully, but with gentleness and consideration. Patient continuance in well-doing will put to shame those who harshly and disrespectfully treat men.

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance."

Even if rectitude of conduct fails of present remuneration, it will be rewarded in the future. If a slave is faithful, and his faithfulness is not remunerated; or, if an apprentice does the best he can, and is not appreciated, he is not to relax his efforts to do well. The apostle teaches that servants should do right, although their right conduct is not recompensed immediately. The reckoning is not to be limited to a short period. There is a providence which reaches through all one's life. He that does right under all circumstances, and especially under circumstances whose tendency is to lead men to wrong-doing, will certainly receive his reward sooner or later. The thing works itself out in one way or another. All a man's life is a period in which he is to be repaid for his right doings. And there is to be another life, in which there is to be another and grander remuneration.

This is the general statement, then, of the doctrine under consideration; namely, that God includes the whole system in which we live as part and parcel of one economy; and that he identifies himself with every portion of it; so that no man can act in any way, without acting, not only directly and personally toward the more obvious and proximate causes, but remotely and subtly through them toward the ever-living, the ever-just, and the ever-loving God.

It is this view, I remark, first, by way of application, that makes good things better, and beautiful things more beautiful, and admirable things yet more admirable. God stands behind every good and noble thing which we love. If you love your father and mother, if you love your brother and sister, if you love your husband or wife, if you love your friend and neighbor, if you love teacher, governor, prophet or king, through these you are brought near to God. And there is an exaltation in the consideration that we do not end our services with those who are next to us; that our affections go further and lay hold on those that are beyond. We seem to aim them at certain objects; we seem to bury them in

the hearts of those to whom we are especially attached; we seem to plant them in the midst of those who are near and dear to us; but they go on and on and touch a higher nerve.

The lover does not love alone. The thrill which he feels is a part of the universal experience. God is loved when loveliness is loved. God is honored when honor is recognized. God is obeyed when true magistracy is obeyed. And all our relations tend toward exaltation. For we never love downward. We never love outwardly on a level with ourselves. Whoever loves rightly loves upward, and places the object of his love, as it were, against the bosom of God, and, loving that object, loves God in whose bosom it is. This thought is one which is the source of great power and beauty and dignity.

An element of time is indispensable to us; but that which we need above everything else is a sense of things eternal. There is nothing more fugitive than ordinary human affections. There is nothing that seems more like the reflection of iridescent hues, which are reflected for a moment in the sunlight, and then are gone. On the other hand, there is nothing that seems more permanent and unwasting than a mother's love. There is immortality in maternal love, and in paternal love, because they do not stop on the object, the human heart. There is a lens through which it passes, and it becomes something more in its relations to a higher government of which our earthly government is but an image or shadow.

Secondly, when men are not helped by their circumstances; when their efforts fail to bring the best results; when all ordinary influences tend to provoke the worst side of human nature—then our Lord says, "Do the right thing, and do it for me." Is it possible? Yes, it is possible, if one can but bring himself to believe that Christ is identified with him—that every thought and every feeling, positive or negative, has a relation directly to Christ. It is not easy to do right under discouraging circumstances, but it is possible.

A boy is bound out. He is the subject of hard treatment. His mistress and master are both tyrannical. His fare is bad, and his treatment is as bad. He is full of high spirits and vague yearnings. Everything in him seems repressed; and under a sense of injury, he is tempted to sulk, and neglect his duty. His better nature is in danger of being eaten out by the rust and corrosion of anger and revenge. The bad side of him is all the time being irritated. And he says to himself, "I will break this bondage. I will not endure such infernal usage any longer. It shall come to an end." In his master's family is one who has been interested in him from the time

he came as a stranger on the premises; she has admired his industry, and his character, his heart has gone out toward her, and a feeling of mutual confidence has sprung up between them; and, watching him with gentleness, and tenderness, and goodness, in the moment of his distemperature, and displeasure, and desperation, she says to him, "William, there is nothing in my father or mother, I am ashamed to say, to inspire or encourage you to be faithful where you are; you are basely treated; I know what you suffer, and I deeply sympathize with you; but will you not, for my sake, keep on and do the best you can?" With a full assurance of the love which burns in her heart for him, and with a consciousness of the love which burns in his heart for her, he says, "Yes, I will." And now, whether it be day or whether it be night, whether it be light or whether it be dark, what does he care? How prompt, how earnest, how faithful he is! How does he seek to do everything in the best manner, knowing that she will see it, and be made happy by it! How does he seek to make his life manly and noble in every respect! And the old man says, "What has got into this young man? He has turned over a new leaf. I do not understand it." No, he does not; but does not *she* understand it? "For my sake!" she says, now and then, when his courage fails; and do not her words give new strength to him? In the midst of his suffering, is it not a joy for him to work for her sake?

It is thus with Jesus, who loves us, and gave himself for us, and waits for us, and is ready to disclose to us his children the beauty that is in him. When we are in our weakness tempted to do wrong, he asks us to stand in our places and do the things that are right; and he says, "If other motives are not strong enough to lead you to do it, do it as unto me, and not as unto your master; not as unto your employer; not as unto the tyrant who for the time has power over you." And this ought to make life easy in hard places. It ought to inspire the hearts of men with nobility when the devil tempts them to meanness.

In the struggles of men throughout society, the direct motives to the highest conduct are continually failing; and here is precisely the auxiliary motive which we all need.

The secret of the endurance and fidelity of Moses (one of the most extraordinary natures of which there is any record, who fashioned a nation in the wilderness, framed its constitution, and administered its affairs during years which usually are years of dotage) is declared to be this: that he "endured as seeing Him who is invisible."

Over and above the knowledge of things as they are, is the

knowledge of things that are possible; and in all the dark passages of society, in its restrictions and limitations and excitements and provocations, we need that encouragement which comes from the consciousness, "Thou, God, art with me. I am not serving my party, nor my nation, so much as I am serving thee." In the affairs of life; in the fiery temptations which beset us on every hand; in the midst of the discordant elements by which we are surrounded in business, and public places, and elsewhere, what we need, above everything else, is a sense of the kind, and gentle, and loving power of God. If we can have that with us, how will the sea, forever in its storm, be calm to us! If we can have that with us, how easy it will be to do the things which are necessary to be done! Under great provocations to a contrary course, we need more of the consciousness of God with us.

This is the secret of living for our nobler, and not for our lower selves. A large part of our life must be drudgery. By *drudgery* I mean tasks that men ought to perform, but that they do not want to perform—tasks that have in them very little to remunerate. Work is divine. It carries its own food and drink with it. A man loves work if he be a man. His happiness lies in normal and harmonious action, if his powers work harmoniously and right. Now and then, however, there are things which it is incumbent on us to do, but which we do not like to do. I love to take a child and hold it in my arms; but I would not like to cleanse it. I like to watch the sports of children; but I should not like to stand at the tub and wash their linen. There is such a thing as work, and there is such a thing as drudgery. All lives have in them a great deal that men would rather shirk and avoid. But it is manly to do the lowest things, and the most drudging things, cheerfully, "as unto the Lord," in the place where one stands.

No man puts a paling below a precipice. Men do not fall up, and therefore a fence on the lower side of a precipice would be unnecessary. It is only on the upper side that guards are placed, if anywhere.

Happily it is not where things are easy that God stands. I cannot think of God as sitting on a throne and leaving men to take care of themselves. I can only think of him as standing where they need him. I think of God as something tremendous, something immense, filling all space, and not as something microscopic. God is where temptations are. And where vulgarity, and sordidness, and meanness, and treachery, and all things degrading are tending to lead men astray, there the voice of Christ is, saying, "As unto me."

The things which bring us pleasure have not so much voice in them; but the things which tend to provoke our worst feelings stand in such near relation to our innermost lives that, if we could understand what they mean, we should hear them say to us, "As unto the Lord, and not unto men."

You do not like your lesson at school, my little boy. It is dry and difficult. It is up-hill work to master it. Anybody can go down-hill, but it takes legs to go up-hill. Who cannot do things which are so easy that they do themselves? The test of manhood is the power to do with cheerfulness things which are difficult and disagreeable. Do the things that you do not like to do first, and do them best. Do them feeling, "Whatever is hard God accepts with double pleasure from me." Where things, that you are called upon to do go against the grain, there Christ stands, desiring to stimulate and encourage you, and saying, "Do this as to me." Do not, then, shirk hard, disagreeable, painful duties. Do them; and do them as unto God.

There are endless classifications in life. "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first." Although there is a general law running through natural and social affairs in this world, yet there is apparent confusion among men. Those who should be at the top, according to rules of justice and desert, so far as we understand them, are at the bottom. Many persons are poor who deserve wealth. Many men who are virtuous and pure-minded are under the control of men who are impure. It would almost seem that men are out of their sphere in this life, so that nothing but a revolutionary process can rectify the incongruities of their circumstances.

Are those who are placed over you, in the store, in the shop, or on the ship, irritable and provoking? Nevertheless, "obey your masters in the flesh." Obey those who are your superiors according to the false estimate of this physical globe. Obey most faithfully when all the circumstances by which you are surrounded are such as to tempt you to be unfaithful. Make your courage appear when there is no visible ground for encouragement. Let your fidelity be most eminent when the provocations to a want of fidelity are strongest. Serve most cheerfully when it is hardest to serve. For Christ says, "I will take your service as rendered to me."

How many persons examine their evidences and are dissatisfied with them because they come short of the evidences of other people! They hear Christians tell about the experience of Christ's love in their hearts; they hear them tell what Christ has done for their souls; and they go home and say, "I have never had such a rapture of love to Christ as these people have." And Christ says to

them, "If you love me keep my commandments." No matter whether they have the feeling or not, he will take the obedience for the experience. It does not follow, because you have not had a certain experience, that you do not love Christ. If you have no other way of testifying to your love, do it by serving him. He will take the things that you do in lieu of love. Take the things that are hard to do, and do them. See to it that you "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

There is a subtleness in love which transcends that of all other feelings. If you do a thing knowing that it is to be seen of men, you may be actuated by a motive of pride, or the love of approbation; but if you do a thing not expecting that men will know it, you will be more apt to do it from a feeling of love to Christ. There are things done from very subtle motives in the higher ranges of true affection. And if we attempt to do things which are noble under discouragements, for the sake of Christ, we shall receive our reward in the world to come. There is no deed performed, no service rendered, in the name of the Lord, that fails to receive the grateful recognition of Christ. Things that you do to please him when you are tempted of the devil, he will never forget. It is such things that go to make the wreath, the coronet, which is to be ours in the heavenly land.

The excuse which men make to justify their wrong-doing, or their low and vulgar lives, is that their circumstances are unfavorable to noble lives and right-doing. Undoubtedly it is harder for men to live right in some circumstances than in others; but such are the provisions of the Lord Jesus Christ, that no man can be placed in any circumstances in which he may not have the inspiration of the Divine Spirit in his soul, leading him in the right way. Wherever we are, we need not lack for a motive to perform noble deeds. In darkness or twilight, as well as in full daylight, we are to be followers of him who in Gethsemane said, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt," and drank it to the dregs, being upheld and strengthened by angels. Wherever we are, in darkness and trial, under temptatation, we may press the evil away; but when we find that it cannot be avoided, it becomes us to say, "If it must be, let me stand in my place and act as a man, doing my duty as unto the Lord." Then angels will comfort us, and life will be equalized, and by and by the scenes will change. And oh, what a transformation there will be when all that which is relative shall pass away! But when men die, when their bodies are dissolved, there are three

things which remain, if they possessed them before; namely, faith, hope and love. These will abide when death shall have taken down the old tabernacle, and left many of the appetites and passions behind. When we shall be translated into the spiritual condition, around about all that part of us which takes hold on the eternal sphere—our upper selves, our moral selves, our spiritual selves—as centers, shall abide faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is Love.

By this celestial power, then, let us rectify everything that is evil; by it let us interpret all things that are about us; and by it let us live nobler lives. Then, dying, may we rise to the glory and the immortality of the heavenly city.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

To whom could we go but unto thee, thou most merciful God, with all our imperfections and weaknesses; with our ignorances and manifold wants; with our transgressions pressing upon us in memory; with the consciousness every day of our fallibility? Poor in thinking and in conceiving, and yet poorer in the execution of things right, are we; and we need One that can love those who are not lovable. We need One that can find argument in himself, and not in us, for patience and forbearance. We need One whose greatness is more than men can know, and the power of whose greatness is not in his right hand, but in his heart. Such art thou, O Lord God, ancient of days, supreme in heaven and over all the earth, the Guide, the Ruler, but, above all, the Friend and Redeemer. Thou who dost meet the race in its beginnings, and dost minister to it; thou whose servants are the laws of nature; thou who hast ordained all those processes of human life which concern us, and act upon us; thou who art leading the whole earth up as a household of which thou art thyself the Head—thou art fitted for us—for our want, for our weakness; and in thee we are wise and strong and good who in ourselves are foolish, and weak, and full of all unmanly thought.

We rejoice that we may believe thus in thee; that we are not shut away from thee by fear; that we are not left in doubt and apprehension and darkness; that the more we are wounded, and the more our souls inwardly bleed, the nearer are we brought by our necessity to thee, thou that helpest the heart—its Physician.

We rejoice, O Lord, that thou hast taught us in ourselves a little of that which is true of thee, by the gentleness with which we bear with our children, by our patience with them, and by that disinterested kindness which springs from our loving. If in us who are evil, and even selfish, there is such fruit of goodness, how much more abundant is it in thee who art without spot, and without any evil or limitation in goodness. This is the glory of thy being. In thy hands are all things. Thou hast light and thou hast darkness. Thou hast pain and thou hast pleasure. Thou art administering both for joy and for sorrow. Thou art punishing and rewarding. Thou art encouraging and dissuading. Thou art full of all things that shall bring us away from the earthy and from the animal, toward that which is spiritual and divine, and toward our nobler selves. In Jesus Christ thou art holding forth to us the pattern of that which we should be. We behold his meekness and his gentleness; we behold his kindness and long-suffering patience; we behold his great and rejoicing love to thee, and the cheer with which he went about doing good; we behold his sympathy with men, and how he encouraged those who were rejected and outcast and helpless.

O Lord, we beseech of thee that we may bear about with us a sense of Christ. May he be present to us, in thought and in imagination. Every day may we feel that we are by faith joined to him. May we follow thy footsteps through the toughest ways of this life. Make thyself companionable to us. In all the temptations by which we are beset appear for our relief. In the midst of conflict and danger be thou our shield. When the storm is out hide us in thy pavilion till the storm be overpassed. Wait near the ship when it is bestormed, and seems likely to be sunk, and bring us peace. Yea, if we are called to walk upon the turbulent wave, still may we have faith to walk to thee when thou callest us. And if our faith fail, hold forth thy hand in rebuke, and raise us again. May our life be more and more perfectly formed by thine. More and more may it be struck through with the light and beauty of thine.

Thus may we be disciples of Christ. Thou art not ashamed of us because we are poor and needy; nor wilt thou be ashamed of us in the day of glory when thou shalt have fashioned us, when thou shalt have cleansed us from every stain, and when thou shalt present us before the throne of thy Father. May we live in the hope of that day. Though it be vague and undetermined, may we behold the coming glory, the higher life, the nobler development. May we comfort ourselves by the light which comes from this glory of the future.

Wilt thou bless spiritually all those who are in thy presence. May those who are conscious of sin in themselves find ease in the confession of their sin before God. If there are any who desire to make vows and covenants before thee, accept those vows and covenants, and help them to fulfill them. If there are any who would utter thanksgiving to thee for thy mercies toward them, accept that thanksgiving. And we pray that they may have in themselves a testimony that God hath heard them, and will bless them.

We beseech of thee, be with every one as he specially needs. Be with those who are in the midst of burdens and cares and daily labors. May they work as unto the Lord, and not as unto men. We pray that thou wilt redeem us by the trials of life, and bring us at last to the most blessed hour of departure, and then convoy us, by thine angels, home, where we shall find thee, to find whom is to find ourselves. And in thee, bearing thine image and likeness and glory, may we be content.

And we will give all the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken. May it encourage those who are in trouble. May it incite those who are hesitant. May it replenish the zeal of those whose faith is failing them.

We pray that thou wilt help us to be constant under all circumstances, and brave in all trials. May we be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

How soon things will change! How soon all things earthly will come to an end! How soon yokes and burdens will be laid aside! How soon the trials and troubles of this life will be forgotten, or will seem to us as things of far-off memory, or as early dreams! We are hastening from the apparent to the real; from visible things to more transcendent things not seen.

Grant that we may live under the power of this truth more and more. More and more may the power of the eternal world overshadow us. More and more may we be rendered fit for thy kingdom. And, we beseech of thee, stand there before us transfigured as the light of heaven, and guide us through life. Let us not fear dying, but lay hold upon thee. If the water be troubled, or if the night be dark, speak to us comfortable words, and rescue us from the flood, and bring us to triumph and glory and immortality.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be the praise forever. *Amen.*

THE PAST AND THE FUTURE.

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded."—PHIL. III: 12-15.

This letter of Paul's was among the last that he wrote. There is reasonable evidence to believe that he was in prison for the last time before his execution, under the dominion of Nero. Although the letter is not sad, there is in it a strain of that tenderness which one might almost call funereal. In no other letter are there so many abounding terms of affection. The disciples of Christ never before seemed so dear to him; and yet you will observe that although it was now a period of helplessness, increasing and nearly approaching death, instead of attempting to recapitulate and rejoice over the services of the past, he expressly dissuades men from that course. He declares that that which occupies his mind is not the recapitulation of all his past experience and service, but that his life lies yet forward of him. And he introduces that figure, which was a living one then, but which is merely a classical illustration now, of the racers, who when they are in the circuit, and are performing their feats in competition, reach forward, in their rushing intensity, with both body and arms, and think of nothing—neither that which is in the present nor that which is behind—but are measuring the distance before them, with their eyes fixed upon it, and are straining every nerve each to touch the goal first. So it was with this spirit. Instead of congratulating itself on past experiences, and going over and over and over again the history of former days, though he was an old man, broken by much labor and suffering, crushed by chains, imprisoned between soldiers, and standing on the verge of death,—in this last estate, when if at any time anybody might feed upon the reminiscences of the past, Paul now might,—his soul lifts itself up in its nobility,

and says, "Not that I have attained, and am perfect; but this one thing I do, I press forward." There is that significant but not well-understood expression here.

"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended in Christ Jesus."

It is as if he had said, "Christ is the ideal of what a man should be. He has my ideal portrait, as it were, drawn out in his own thought and feeling. There is an exaltation and a grandeur for myself in the time to come, which Christ knows and I do not; but I am following after. I am pressing up toward that thought which Christ has, of what I am and ought to be; and I am determined that I will apprehend it as Christ himself does. Not that I have it; but I will strive for it. My manhood is in the future. My life lies beyond the present."

Yet, we are not to understand, here, or elsewhere, that cautions against going back into the past are dissuasions from the use of memory as an auxiliary in the Christian life, or as an auxiliary to comfort. For, in other places, we have the most pointed exhortations to remember; not to forget; to call to remembrance. The Hebrews, to whom Paul was mainly writing, had, in their very national customs, symbols and instructions which were designed to carry men back to past histories, and to profit them by the observations of things gone by, but freshly recalled to memory.

All the future, in some sense, has its roots in the past. We cannot ignore the past, and live wholly in the future. If we were stripped of the ability to remember, we should never be civilized. The power to convert past things to present uses, and present things to future uses, measures the civilizing force of men and nations.

On the other hand, this is a noble protest against the tendency of men who have acquired possessions and achieved success, to cease growing; to look at the past as a great granary in which is stored enough of the fruit of life to warrant their sitting down and contenting themselves with things already accomplished. It is a dissuasion from ignoble contentment in things attained; and from going back to that which is past as a ground of excuse for present inactivity, or for a lack of enterprise in the future.

It may befit a silk-worm, when it has gnawed its little leaf, to roll itself up in a cocoon of silken threads, spun out of its own body; but it is poor business for anything but a silk-worm. It is poor business for a man to roll himself up, and spin out of his past achievements that which shall form his own covering.

The past is to be used as a medicine or as a wine, but not as a food. It may furnish reasons for gratitude when we look back in all the way in which God has led us—upon our childhood; upon the household in which we were reared; upon our near and dear friends; upon our friendships and loves; upon our successes; upon those experiences in which the providence of God has been manifest to us. The long retrospect may oftentimes fill the soul with vivid emotions of thanksgiving. It may also breed a trust in God for times to come. It may lift one out of discouragements. It may minister hope in great exigencies. And for such purposes as these it is eminently wise and proper for one to look back and use the past. We are not absolutely to forget the things that are behind. It is only relatively that we are to do this. Going back may be a means of guidance and of caution.

The sins that are in the past should not have been committed in vain; for although sin as our master is to be dreaded and shunned, yet when we have once passed through the experience of it, we ought so to use it that it shall serve us and minister to our benefit.

Our mistakes; the partialisms of our life; all its imperfections—these things should have a part of meditation at times and in due measure. For the past life would be lost in some of its best elements, if we did not from it learn how to take a better course in time to come. Every man's past life should be his critic, his censor, his guide. He who lives, and is done with life the moment it drops hour by hour from his hands, is not half a man. He is like a plucked plant that stands in water without roots of its own, and can have no growth, and soon fades and passes away.

The past should be as a granary from which we are to take seeds to plant for new harvests.

It may be, too, at times, a refuge. The house of memory may be a hiding-place where present trouble cannot find us. Memory may be that pavilion where God hides his beloved until the storm be overpast. If the way be too great for us; if the burdens be heavier than we can bear; if the horizon be shut in, and the darkness is above and about, it is better that we should retreat backward to the land of light in former times, and dwell there a while rather than give up in discouragement and own that we are vanquished. Overcome, is what men should never be. If the present be full of temptation and trial, go out of it. It is better to go forward; but if the way be shut up before you, go backward. Go anywhere rather than dwell in darkness. Ye are children of light. Let worms be crushed; let insects perish; but let men

never yield to despair. You carry God in you. It is not for you to be overshadowed and darkened and overcome. There are the gates behind, and the gates before; and if it be needful, go back into the past, and gather up all its memories of joys gone by, and weave out of them some flowers that shall be fragrant; and by and by, when you return again to the present duties of life, it may be that the storm will be past, and that the horizon will appear again with a hopeful light.

But there is a use of the past which is full of danger to manliness. It is seductive, persuasive, but mischievous. To many, the past is a land of despondency. Some are soured all their life long on account of an experience gone by. Their childhood was blighted. It is a melancholy utterance of men, when, now and then, they say, "I never was a child." One of the saddest things that I see in the street is little children that never have been children—boys prematurely sharp; keen when they are five years old; cunning; self-caring; preying upon each other, with their little hands lifted in the great battle against life—children that are not children—homunculi—men dwarfed.

While some look back along the way of life and rejoice in the household, it having been a palace of treasures to them, how many there are who look upon a spoiled childhood, ugly parents, hard selfishness, indigence, toil, and trouble! How many look back to see many elements of error instilled into their early manhood! How many, in surveying the past, see things that they did which they would fain leave out if possible, as the murderer would fain obliterate the stain of blood from his hands, but which they cannot get rid of! How many consciences there are among men that are not strong enough to hinder evil, but are strong enough to turn back and sting them for it! How many consciences there are which, when they have once got possession of a man, hold on to him, and torment him! The past—how full is it of sins which have left their mark; sins that often rise up and stalk like ghosts in men's sensitive imaginations and memories; sins which sometimes amount to crimes, and haunt men like fiends! There be those who come back and recount their experiences, and do not choose to exert themselves in the direction of manhood because the future is blocked up by the past.

Now, if there be things to which these words may be applied with more power than to others, they are the crimes, the sins and the misfortunes of the past: "Let the dead bury their dead." And when once the past has buried its dead, let them stay buried, and not come again upon the face of the earth. Who would care to

keep and treasure up all the warts, and scabs, and issues, and ichor, and excrements of his diseased experience through life as if it would do him any good to go and see what sickness had done in a morbid condition of tissue and body? And how much worse it is to keep the soul's morbid conditions in memory, and go back, and go back, and go back to them! Manhood does not lie there. It is not in the review of these mistakes, it is not in profound morbidity, that man ever gets any uplift. No sackcloth will help you. No perpetual crucifixion in view of past transgressions will help you. The best way to deal with your sins is to have a new life. Bury the past in the present and in the future.

There be many who brood over their sorrows and misfortunes and failures and things lost. There be many who wander up and down in the passages of their past life, as a single traveler wanders through an empty house that is full of rooms, with no company nor light nor warmth. They are forever complaining—forever bemoaning the troubles of the past. And so to them memory is a chamber of torments—a place of cruel bondage—an Egypt.

I have sometimes come out from wanderings in the fields, and seen, lying, coiled up and swollen, a serpent, which all men instinctively seem to abhor, and in whose mouth was some helpless toad or frog, that had not been able nimbly to escape him. The victim which he had half swallowed, he was still swallowing, and swallowing, and swallowing, till it was gone. And so, toad-like, many and many a one lies helpless in the jaws of the open-mouthed serpent of the past. Cruel memory, with long struggle, is swallowing them down; until at last they disappear. They are victims of the suffering, and weariness, and wretchedness, and contemptible misery of the past.

Still worse is it when one goes back to the past to find, not grief, nor sorrow, but lazy contentment—contentment with himself, contentment with his manhood; contentment with the pitiful things which he has earned. As if a man was represented simply by the little that he does! As if any amount of learning, or any amount of public service, or any amount of merchandise, or any amount of labor in any profession, or any amount of accumulation, was a fair representative of the God that is in you or me! As if in our lower and cruder states, in our half-developed life, we could do anything that would be a fit measure of the manhood which Christ thought of, and by which we were apprehended of him, and which we should strive to apprehend in him! As if the servile tasks, as if all the things which we have done with labor-pains and throes, during our past life, were a fit memorial or monument of the divin

ity that is in us! As if they were a pigment fit to paint our portraits with!

If I am only that which I have been, I am of all men most miserable. If I am only that which, in a crude way of thinking and believing, the past seems to me; if I am merely a creature storm-thrown, cast hither and thither, with endless oscillations, without symmetry or proportions, harassed, hetched, oftentimes beaten down, speckled, spotted, decayed, such as I have been in the past, then I am hardly worth saving. I am better worth burying. I am no better than a leaf, and no better than the bug that is on it. But that is not the case with me.

What Lord Bacon was when his nurse stood him up by the side of a chair, and he tumbled headlong down; what Lord Bacon was in all the little noisome infelicities of his youth, did not measure what Lord Bacon became in his philosophical largeness. And as the intellection of children is no criterion by which to judge of their manhood in later years; so what a man has been is no sign of what he is to be. Oh! what power lies buried in you that you know not of. Oh! what light lies waiting to burst through the orient imagination which yet has never streamed forth. Oh! what treasures, what loves, what fortitudes, what sweetnesses, what glories are buried in the human soul, which future possibilities shall develop.

The past is no safe ground; and yet there are those who sit mumbling their satisfaction. They boast of what they have done. They have made fortunes. They have scraped in money—they are not careful to recount how! They have built warehouses. They have invented this, that or the other thing. And so they sit piping about themselves as if the world had been sustained to keep them up, and as if the little that they had done here and there was a fit theme for their everlasting meditation.

A man is a fool who sits looking backward for himself in the past. Ah! what shallow vain conceit there is in men! Forget the things that are behind. That is not where you live. Your roots are not there. They are in the present; and you should reach up into the other life.

So men often use service in the past as a just claim or release from service in the future. While the blood flows warm in them, and while enterprise is impetuous, men labor; but as they come to mid-life, or begin to take hold upon later years, they say: "I have done my share; I have had my time; I will give place to younger men. It is not for me to go on forever. I have done great works; I have served well my day and generation; and now I will step aside."

When God is tired, you have a right to be tired, and not till then. You are of him. Your best and truest self is divine; and in that there is no weariness, no variableness, no shadow of turning. When flame ceases to blaze upward, it ceases to be flame. When coals cease to glow, they go to ashes. When men cease to plan a life of activity for all their noblest powers, decadence has begun. There should be no remission to labor. The last thing a man does—even dying—should be positive; and one should *step out*. All our true manhood is living, is active; it feeds on the future. And not what we have been, not what we are, but what we shall be, should fill our minds with a generous aspiration, as well as with a generous discontent for all our past achievements.

“When He who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

God is an artist, and we do not know what he is doing. When stores are being built, and they are making them beautiful inside, an inclosure of boards is often put about them, so that no man may see what is going on there, until by and by, when they take down the boards, the beautiful carving or frescoing shines out suddenly.

God works behind screens, and we do not know what he is doing, either in ourselves or in others. “It doth not yet appear.” There are a great many things done in us our experience of which is no testimony of what their real nature is. It is not in the nascent state, it is not in the sprouting condition, that we know the nature of flowers or fruits, but in their ultimate states. God is working in men “to will and to do of his good pleasure;” but what that working means we can tell only in the long future. Our life lies beyond; and every man should feel the sacred inspiration, and press forward. We are saved by hope.

This leads me to say that the sources of activity and continued fruitfulness are in the future. It is by throwing forward the mind into new fields that we maintain freshness in its faculties. It is by giving it swing that its wings grow strong to soar up to the very sun.

Every year trees slough their leaves, and never know their own children any more. Though they do daintily nourish them all summer, and hold them in their bosom, and listen to their song; though through them they, in autumn days like these, grow radiant, and heaven is reflected from their boughs in all its glory, yet soon they cast them off, and throw them to the ground, and give them to the winds, and let them decay, and never mourn for them, nor call them back again. Nor do they know that they have had them, as they sleep through the winter with germs of

other leaves in them, which shall be pushed forth when the spring calls to remembrance their life again.

Every man's days of achievement should every year be cast from him; he should let them go, and they should be forgotten, that new days and new achievements may come forth, meaning growth, and indicating expansion.

Even when the branches are bare, as ere long they shall be; when the tree stands in winter self-contained, life is still going on secretly, and it is preparing to bear again. And whether your boughs are bare, or are lean and unclothed, still let life be going on in you. Live much when it is summer, and still live when the winter is on you.

He is truly a man who is in full enterprise; who is perpetually planning new works; who is constantly acquiring new thoughts; who is all the time opening new chambers; who is every day furnishing the rooms of his mind with new pictures and new furniture; who is incessantly spreading for himself a new table with noble aspirations and endeavors, as the sign of soul-life. Every man who really lives is living by a generous use of the future.

Then again, those faculties by which we look into the future take hold of things unseen. The most precious parts of the human mind are the furthest from the animal passions and appetites, and the nearest to the spiritual. The finest, noblest, highest form of reason—reason idealized by the imagination; all the more subtle elements which seem to have power almost to comprehend the reality which lies beyond the present in the great spirit-world—these are the faculties by which we live in the future, and thus take hold of things yet unaccomplished, educating the best part of our nature, and building us up more than we know.

For these and many other reasons that time would fail me to tell, Christian brethren, let me renew the exhortation of the apostle, and say to you: "Forget the things that are behind, and press forward to those things which are before." O man in youth, in mid-life, or in age, to whom has come comparative quiescence; O thou that by discouragements or by a treacherous quietude and restfulness art ceasing tasks and labors, and going out with less and less alacrity morning by morning; O thou shrinking soul, growing small by disease, and, like an apple long kept, shriveling to a leather-like insipidity, to you comes this word of God! It is not for you to stand content in your present condition; it is not for you to reckon your whole life as treasured up in the past: it is for you, if you be a true man, touched by the Spirit of

God, never to cease activity. Let your blood start again. Teach your heart to beat once more with its old pulsations, and live to bring out of the great treasure-house of things unattempted and unaccomplished more blessed results than have been known before.

There have been men who, when they have reached fifty or fifty-five years of age, have said: "Now I am on the down-hill side of life, and it is not for me to attempt much;" and yet, there has come to them some inspiration, some rousing, some impetus, divine and blessed, and they have begun again; and in the last quarter of a century their life has done more than it did in all the rest of their days put together. Is it wise for a man, whose mind has been tempered, who has knowledge that has come from experience, and who has been made strong by long enduring—is it wise for such a man to throw away the education of his whole life? Is it wise that his experience and knowledge should be applied to nothing, and that he should do nothing?

We do not blame the early blossoming plants, that they stand with empty stalks in summer. This may do for plants; but for a man to stand like a last year's mullein-stalk, doing little or nothing, is a shame. He was born of the dust, and he is dust himself—not a man.

O lazy old men; O non-ambitious middle-aged men; O dainty, melancholy, sentimental young men, who are talking about life's being almost done, shake the bough of the tree again! Bring down more fruit. Open the furrows once more. Cast in the seed of new endeavors. Live again! for you are active only when you are thinking, planning, executing, bearing, suffering. Never whine. Leave whining for the dogs. You are a son of God. You were not whelped, to be a son of the gutter. Live on. Live forward, sloughing infirmity, sloughing sins, sloughing crimes, and the memory of them, if they hold you down. Stretch out hands of aspiration. Reach after new thoughts and new aspirations.

It is never too late to mend. It is never too late to begin again. It is never too late to sow. It is never too late to reap. Go through life with the reaper's song in your mouth; and when you die carry your sheaves with you to heaven.

There is many a household that needs this same word of exhortation. There is many a desponding family where grief dwells in over familiarity. There is many a one that is saying, "It is too late in life to build again." Why should one have schoolmasters sent to him—and mistakes are schoolmasters; why should one have prophets sent to him—and sins are prophets and interpreters of

God's will; why should one have all infirmities and non-accomplishments sent to him—and these infirmities and non-accomplishments speak to us out of the past, and become to us seers of the future; why should one have all these things, and derive no benefit from them? Is there discord and trouble in your household? Have darkness and gloom settled over it? Have many treasures been taken out of it? Do the lights which have long illuminated it burn dimly? Nevertheless, O father and mother, or orphan children, build again that household! Do not be weary. Do not despond. Despair is the devil to you. Hope is God's voice to you, saying, "It is never too late to build again." Hope on; hold on; love on; live on; for there is a life of the household which lies before you yet.

You have no power in that which is past. Life that is lived stands ghastly as a grave-stone. You cannot change it a particle. You cannot wipe out a deed. You cannot obliterate a fact. You cannot alter the proportion of a single element. But the future is mutable. It is as plastic as clay in the hand of the artist. With the future anything can be done if you but have the heart to do it. Then build out of the future. Quarry in its mines. Bring from it materials for your wants and uses.

And that which is true of the individual and of the family is eminently true of the church. Christian brethren, it has pleased God to give us in the week past one of the most remarkable experiences which it has been vouchsafed to any church ever to have. We have been led as his people of old were led, not knowing what should befall us from day to day. A quarter of a century has rounded up its period, and we have been permitted to have a week of spiritual rejoicing. We have called up the past, and reviewed its experiences. God grant that this week may be a granary out of which shall come seed for new and better growths in years to come. This church is young. It has just begun to work. It has just begun to learn the use of its hands. It has just begun to syllable the name of "Father." Oh what enterprise, oh what power, oh what vigilance and intensity of combined labors are before this church, if it is only faithful! This church should be kindled as a light. It should supply a warmth at which the shivering and chilled hearts of men may warm themselves. And in the future more abundantly than in the past should it be a blessing to those who come under its influence. When so much as now did we know the great bounty of our God? When so much as now was the heart of Jesus Christ so well understood? When were there as many praying mothers and praying fathers as there are now? When were there

so many laborers—young men and maidens—as there are to-day? When has there been so much experience in gathering, and in winning those who are gathered, as now? And shall all this equipage, shall all these accomplishments, shall this multitudinous experience be stored up, and shall we write upon them as upon a tomb, “DEAD”?

No, no! Forgetting the things that are behind, except as a spur to future achievements, look forward. Pray to-day and every day, labor to-day and every day, for the future of this church; and cease not to seek to win souls from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to the kingdom and glory and beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That which is true of the church is true also of the nation and of the world. The days of darkness and bondage and suffering are fast passing away. The whole creation has groaned and travailed in pain until now; but it shall not be so always. Already some single notes break in.

In summer I wake up at four o'clock in the morning, or earlier, and often listen to the sounds of twilight that are beginning to come on. By and by I hear some uneasy bird stir her mate; and a little complaining note breaks out—a mere twitter. Then there is a little louder sound. And then there is another more outspoken yet. This wakes up a dozen other songsters; and one sounds out his note, and another his note, and another his note. And at last every shrub, and every tree, and all the fields are full of joyful noises, and the whole heaven is not big enough to contain the sweet and musical racket.

The world has heard some few notes. The morning is dawning over the mountain. Here a bird sings, and there a bird. But we have not had the outburst. The choral song is yet to come. It draws near. The world yet, instead of groaning and travailing in pain, shall lift up its voice, full of cheer and solemnity, and rejoice, so that in heaven and all the universe the redeemed shall chant the praise of Him who loved the world, and saved it, and perfected it.

In that high enterprise you have enlisted. Therefore work. Work in faith, in hope, and in love. Work living, and work dying. **Living or dying, ye are the Lord's.**

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, Eternal Father, and God of all the earth, for the refreshment of thy Spirit, and for that instruction by which we shall know ourselves, and be lifted up into some conception of sonship. How glad must thou be, since we are so glad when our children come home, in the coming to thee of thine own! Though they come in feebleness, and often as the prodigal came; though they come bearing the marks of hard usage in their wanderings, yet they are thine. Every heart that palpitates is thine. Every soul that yearns is thine. Every one on whom evil is stamped is thine; and every one that wrestles therewith, and is emerging toward something better, is thine. There are none so vile that thou canst not find good in them by which thou mayest work out benefit; and there are none so good that, if they should measure themselves by that which is good in thy sight, they would not seem altogether unholy and impure. We rejoice that thou dost embrace all in the arms of thy thought and thy providence and thy mercy; and that none escape thee—not the poor; not the most obscure; not the hidden; not those that are out of the way. We rejoice that thy sun shines on the evil and on the good, and that thy rain falls on the just and on the unjust. We rejoice that nature is serving those, whatever be their estate or case, who are thine—and all are thine. And we rejoice that thy grace is yet more ample than the gifts and the bounties which come through nature. And we pray that we may not be so foolish as to cast aside these proffered mercies of God, and to cast ourselves from thee. As those that live in caves, and are shut out from the light of the sun, though it is summer, grant that we may not hide ourselves from the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and go back, so as not to have that power and comfort of love manifested toward us which issues forth from thee. May we not be afraid to look down into ourselves and see what mischief is there. May we not be afraid of the hour of sickness. May we not be afraid of pain. May we know that there is a Physician to whom we can go, who hath no reproach in his lip, and no severity in his hand, and who will dwell with us for health; and that if there be pain, it is a pain which breeds joy by and by.

Grant that every one of us may strive to know his own state, and make application to thee, and receive grace to help in time of need.

We thank thee for that encouragement which we have derived from our own experience. We are witnesses of thy goodness. We look back through years that are filled with the memories of God's mercy. How many fears, as now we look back upon them, that were set to terrify us, and to smite us down to the ground, do we see to have been false prophets! How didst thou overthrow them, and with victorious hope and joy sustain us when we expected downfall or death! How many discouragements have been rolled out of the way! How many times, when we have found it impossible to go forward for the lions, hast thou stopped the mouths of the lions! How many times, when the wilderness was tangled, and we could not find our way, has thy voice guided us out of the entanglements, and planted our feet in a large place, filled with light and peace! The soul that rests in thee is convoyed safely through every peril, and is lifted up out of every trouble. In every darkness there is a light dawning.

In thee, O Lord, are all things. Thou art all in all. And we rejoice in thee. And as our past experience hath testified to thine unwearied goodness, so we desire now, for the future, not to take thy name upon our lips alone, but to be re-affianced to thee. We desire to give love to thee, and to unite our souls to thine. We desire to be one with thee, as thou art one with the Father. Fill us, we pray thee, with thy Spirit, that we may overcome

temptation, and cast away easily-besetting sins, and rise higher than our present condition. By the power of faith may we discern the invisible. May we see the glory of God, and all the blessedness therein which lies undeveloped before us. May we live by faith and hope, and reach forward toward that which is beyond, rejoicing in the revelation that yet one day shall be brought unto us.

If any are discouraged in Christian living, we pray that thou wilt speak very mercifully unto them, and that thou wilt breathe hope upon their despondency, and light upon their darkness, and strength upon their weakness.

If any are burdened with troubles and cares, may they find that God is more than a Saviour to them. Be thou a cross to them; and when they shall have given themselves willingly to it, give them life and strength and support therein.

We beseech of thee that those may find comfort in thee this morning who find comfort in no other source. Be very near to them. Be very nourishing to their souls. May they feel that the wings of God are above them. If the darkness is great, it is but the concealment of his brooding. And grant that they may never feel so near to thee as when they are in trouble.

We pray that thou wilt comfort all those who in the allotments of thy providence are sufferers in any wise. Enlighten those who are perplexed and doubtful in mind. Guide those who have lost the way, and are backslidden. Release those who are in captivity. Break all bonds. Open prison doors. Give liberty to spiritual captives on every side, and bring them forth rejoicing as emancipated spirits.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast bestowed upon this church and congregation. Accept our thanks for all the things which thou hast done to it, and through it to the world, in the past. We look back upon them with gratitude. But we desire to turn our eyes away from over-much looking upon that which has been in the past to that which is now before us. May we enter upon new labors. May we enterprise better things. May we not be content to garner praise, and sit quiet in our place. What are all the things of the past but a motive and a guidance to things greater and purer and nobler, for the cause of God and the welfare of men?

Grant that we may feel how great is the glory and the joy which we have in Christ Jesus. May we have his spirit so beating in us evermore that all the world shall seem as a host of ourselves. All the things that the sun above us brings forth—may we feel, as we touch them, that we touch our Father's things, and that they are ours because we are the sons of God. And all men, in all nations—may we call them kindred, and feel the divine love in our hearts and in theirs uniting us together.

We pray, O Lord, that thy mercies may abound more and more. May revivals of religion prevail through all the land. Grant that schools may spring up everywhere, that the darkness of ignorance may be driven away, that justice may prevail, and that laws may be straightened, and their administration become more and more pure. We thank thee that thou art turning back the iniquity of unjust judges, and bringing the abominations of wickedness upon the heads of those who wrought it, and purifying the ways of public administration, and re-establishing the institutions of this land in righteousness. May the work go forward.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that men may grow more noble and disinterested. May selfishness slink back again to its den. May pride that works mischief be held in check. May avarice cease.

We pray that thou wilt grant the spirit of true brotherhood to this whole people. May men work together for the things which shall establish justice, truth, intelligence, unity, and universal happiness. And may the power of

this nation be used, not to overthrow the weak, or mislead the blind and ignorant, but to hold them up, and lead them in better ways.

We thank thee, O Lord, for that degree of sympathy which is beginning to obtain among the nations; and we pray that it may be fostered by thy good Spirit and providence. May nations cease to be toward each other as roaming beasts in the wilderness. We pray that thou wilt grant that strength may be borne in love, and that wisdom may be disallied from pride and selfishness, and become the right hand of mercy and goodness. We pray, O God, that nations may learn war no more, and that the day may come, even in our life-time, when all the strength of national life shall not be piled up for defending or for destroying, but shall be made to minister to purity, and knowledge, and justice, and truth, and love, and universal happiness. There is enough in the world to bless the world, if men would bestow it thereunto.

Lord, open blind eyes, soften hard hearts, and lead in a better way those who have so long been stumbling in the darkness of the wilderness. Thou hast promised; yet thou hast not fulfilled; and the ages wait for thee. O thou that dwellest in eternity, bethink thee of our littleness, and of the shortness of our years, and hasten the fulfilment of thy counsels, and of thy promises, that all the earth may see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praise everlasting. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant that we may draw wisdom from the past, and inspiration and motive from the future. Thou art ever before us. To thee we lift up our eyes, never looking backward, but always looking forward. Draw us by thine own example, who, for the joy that was set before thee, didst endure the cross, despising the shame, and art set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Grant, we pray thee, comfort and consolation to all who suffer to-day. Give them deliverance from all their troubles. May they rise above them all. By the blessed power of a sanctified imagination, may they take hold of things unseen, and may things that are not be mightier than the things that are. Help us again to sing; dismiss us then with thy blessing. Go home with us. Make every house a place of blessedness and joy. And at last bring us to thy heavenly kingdom. And we will praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

MORAL HONESTY AND MORAL EARNESTNESS.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—LUKE xiv., 26, 27.

[Pretty steep step-stones those are, to the gate of a new kingdom.]

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."—JOHN xiv., 6.

Whatever may be the fate of the question as to the divinity of Christ, textually, and upon the lower grounds of philosophy, it seems impossible to me to accept Jesus as a mere man without throwing out the most striking elements of his character. All those things which lift themselves above the ordinary horizon of an instructor, and leave us almost gasping by their boldness, must be left out, if we so regard him. Christ must have been either insane or divine. If he was a man, for him to have made such claims for himself as he did, indicated insanity. On the supposition that he was divine, these claims are rational, and indicate a Being transcending the measure of a man. He was our Exemplar of the Father. He was the manifestation of God to men. He epitomized in himself the universal. The obscure in his teaching is that in which he glides from the local and temporary to higher things, that in their nature are universal, and are therefore difficult of comprehension by us. "I am the way"—I am a practical development. "I am the truth"—I represent the reality. "I am the life"—not an abstraction, not a system, do I bring. I bring the life itself. I represent to the world, by a practical life, the great elements which concern the world to come. He stands for system, for practice and for being, all at once; and that is as it should be, if he be divine.

It is not, however, the divinity of Christ that I am to preach about to day. This is simply on the way to explain the conditions of discipleship. When, therefore, he says to men that no one can come to him who does not hate father and mother and brother and

sister, if it be meant that love to God requires the sacrifice of all other loves, it is monstrous, and divinity is demoniac. It must mean something else than that. This is the hardest condition that is thrown into the whole flow of the Saviour's teaching. But if it mean that in attempting to follow Jesus, as the representation of supreme good, supreme wisdom, and supreme moral truth, we are so to love that which is right and just and true and beneficent and good that we shall sacrifice everything rather than give up this supreme excellence, then God be thanked that there has been such a sentiment uttered and embodied. That is right; and there is no one who has a touch of manhood in him who does not feel that when once a man has his eyes open to see the noblest and best things, he ought to give up everything on earth rather than yield his convictions in regard to them, or his fidelity to those convictions. It is an appeal to universal heroism. All truths end in God. They began there. They come back there. All pure and disinterested lovers of truth, therefore, though they may not know it, are working their way back toward God. And if Christ be the manifestation of God upon earth, they are working toward him.

The following of the stars by the magi is again seen where men sweep the heavens for truth; and though they may not discover the nature of divinity, if they reveal any facts which God has implanted in the universe, they are working toward him. The whole world is awaking. Men are reaching out in every direction for truth. New fields and new methods are being discovered. The stars in the heavens above, and the strata in the earth beneath are becoming witnesses, and are being brought one after another to the stand to testify who made them, and, as far as may be, why he made them.

It is in this view that we read the second passage of our text, which is an inculcation of moral honesty and moral earnestness; and this is the subject which I am going to speak of this morning.

It is declared that no man can come to God who does not hate his father and mother, his brother and sister, his wife, and himself. That is to say, there is no one thing that a man shall hold so dear to himself, if it ever comes to that, as to erect it into equality with the allegiance which he owes to his convictions of that which is pure and just and right and true, or into superiority over it. One's manhood lies higher up than mere social relations. It is not to be sacrificed for anything. Every one's manhood lies in the bosom of his God, and in all the faiths and convictions which spring from him.

This passage, therefore, must not be construed in a narrow and

sectarian spirit. It gives no one a right to assert that his definition of Christ is the only true definition. No man has a true definition of Christ. Christ is a representative of universal truth, of universal life in activity, and of universal practicalness. And that is the Christ that every heart must aspire to. There is a noonday Christ, there is a twilight Christ, and there is a midnight Christ. Where men discern him, and believe him to be personal, God over all, blessed and blessing forever, I call him the noonday Christ. He is unspeakably dear. He is full of instruction, and full of comfort, ministering, through human thought, to human faith, endless bounty. And there is a twilight Christ where men, not seeing a person, nor understanding the full meaning of Scripture teaching, yet believe in truth, and honor, and purity, and all beneficence, and are working toward quality, not knowing that qualities themselves are but the signs of personality. They are working toward Christ; but it is a twilight Christ whom they do not discern themselves. Then there are a great many mute and undiscerning natures who have heart-swells and aspirations, and blind yearnings, and soul-sicknesses. It is God suffering pain with them that affects them. They long, they know not for what. There is a midnight Christ—a Christ wrapped in darkness—that they know nothing of. It is the necessity of giving one's whole being to right-thinking, right acting, and right feeling, that they are experiencing. All truths of a higher mind need to have soul-force applied to them. Truth, as we speak of it, is an abstraction. Truths that are to have any power are to become incarnated in us, and are to get their power by that which we put behind them or add to them. There is a truth of patriotism; but it is of no validity whatever till it makes a patriot. It is the human element which he gives to patriotism that makes it powerful. The abstract doctrine of love would be well enough if men were nothing but spectators; but love, to have any power, must have fathers and mothers on earth. There must be homes, there must be brothers and sisters, and the truth itself must become a living quality, or it is good for nothing—in the conditions in which we live, at any rate. He that accepts truth, and feels its excellence, must give to it his own personal force. And that is what we mean by *believing*, in distinction from *perceiving*. It is such an acceptance of truth that it kindles in us, or we kindle around it, the understanding, the imagination, and the emotions also. This demands loyalty to conviction, moral honesty and moral earnestness. No man believes anything *until he has his being aroused* according to the proper measure of the truth that is presented to him, and adds the force of his being to that which

he believes. This giving of yourself to the truth that you hold, is what I mean by *moral earnestness and moral honesty*.

This is the root of much of Christ's teaching. His age had in it the Greek element. The Greeks had carried their philosophy and speculations over the whole region round about Palestine, and through it; and they liked to have swept away the whole Jewish system by their philosophy. There was also in his day the pure Jewish element, developed chiefly in the direction of patriotism, but also in the general direction of moral intensity, whether it was applied to country or to faith. There was likewise a Pharisaic element. A Pharisee was one who reduced everything to machinery, as it were, and worshiped that. He was the ritualist of antiquity. He had spots in him that were good, but professionally and distinctively he was the mere worshiper of an external ritual. Next were the Sadducees, or materialists. Their system was a cross between the Greek philosophy and the Pharasaic machinism.

Now, all these things were in conflict in the community, and our Master saw how many there were who believed a little in one thing, a little in another, and a little in another. He saw that there was no strong conviction; that there was no faith which took men up, as it were, by the roots. There was nothing in his time which made men willing to live and suffer and die for their convictions. Men were effeminate. They were selfish. They were niggling. They were jealous. They were mean. They ran round in little narrow circles of sectarianism. They did not feel the great pulse of universal truth. Nor did they feel the ardor and enthusiasm of divinity in truth. There was nothing in the truth as they held it that magnified them. They were minified all the time. Their idea of truth was whittling them sharp and narrow and fragile, and not building them up broad and high.

Therefore it was, that all the way through his life Christ demanded *believing*: not a catechetical acceptance of this or that schedule, but a heart that believed, and acted as it believed. Earnestness; sympathy with things true, everywhere, and not with things dry and philosophical merely; heartfelt enthusiasm; real manhood—full-fountained, large-streamed, outplaying manhood—this was what Christ was aiming after. All through his life he was seeking to make people dependent on that, asking, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" There were all kinds of men, swearing by all manner of things: there were some men that swore by the temple, and some that swore by Samaria, and some that swore by Athens, and some that swore by Rome; but there were none that swore reverently by the God of the uni-

verse, and the race, and the grandeur thereof. Faith in these was almost unknown.

Christ was all the time teaching these universal truths—central love, and, as issuing from it, conscience, equity, and fidelity. God, the representative of the Father; Christ Jesus, the manifestation of God; love, the grand vital point of the universe; all beliefs infused with love and vitalized by enthusiasm; and manhood, following faith and belief,—such were the elements of the teaching of Christ, as I read his life in the Gospels. He was himself a *man* in the nobler sense of that term, and he meant that his disciples should be men. Manhood was what he sought, and it was this that he wrought out. He taught his disciples to believe with earnestness, and to drive home their beliefs upon others. He taught them to suffer if need be, though never to court suffering, and to use all ordinary prudence to avoid suffering; but still, rather than give up their belief, to suffer. He taught them, rather than yield their manhood, to take not only suffering, but death itself. To be true to one's own self may be pernicious, or it may be noble. If by yourself you mean your little devilish self, to be true to that is mean enough; but if you have a self that you got from God, and that is higher than the earth, and is always augmenting, and leading to prayer, and to a more faithful performance of duty, it is divine and noble to be true to that. And men were commanded to accept it in love, and to believe in it all through, from core to skin, and from center to circumference again. They were told to put their life into it. And they were to do it all under the illumination and genial warmth of that love which holds all men to be brethren.

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure would give them repentance.”

They were to round out a life dedicated to the race, and dedicated to the everlasting and the infinite. Such a life was declared to be better than a full-fed life in the torpid present.

The intensity of belief which was inculcated by the Saviour has continued down to our day. Since the Gospels were made known, and the disciples were gathered into churches, there has been in the world an intensity of believing which was not known before; but it has been a weak, uneducated intensity, which has largely left out the prime element of Christianity,—namely, love. It has lacked comprehensiveness and balance of the sweet affections. Yet it has been the leaven of all true modern science and modern philosophy. In the church it degenerated into bigotry, and from that into persecution, which is nothing but a logical outgrowth of bigotry.

But these things are passing away. The times in which we live are coming into an intensity of belief which is qualified and sweetened by the love element. As taught by Jesus, moral earnestness was not despotic; but since his time moral earnestness has been used with conviction as a power by which to dash other people in pieces. It is being used even now as a rule by which to judge other people.

Now, every man is to hold his own convictions with intensity; but if he is to hold them with intensity, how shall he use them so as not to make them the measure by which to judge men, or a power by which to put them in bonds? The solution of it is in this: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." That is the key of the idea of supremacy, which consists in conferring blessings. I am to enforce my convictions; and I am to do it, not by making myself stronger than other men, nor by putting myself where I can take advantage of them, but by such pre-eminent humility, and by such self-sacrificing service, that I become more useful to them. I am to put myself under them, and lift them up on to my ground.

Convictions have very largely ministered to spiritual pride and arrogance. Men have said: "I am the interpreter of God's truth: come up and believe that truth." And when Dissent has said, "I will not," it has been smitten and blasted.

When March comes, and the all-seeing sun, that has delayed all winter, comes back to the fields, and beholds nothing, and goes down and comes up, and goes down and comes up, and reaps nothing, and all the temperate zone lies frigid, and not a field has garniture or harvest, what says the sun? Does it smite the earth with its long lines of heat or light, saying, "Cursed be the earth"? No, verily, the sun says, "I will dig under;" and so from day to day the sun goes down into the ground till it gets lower than the roots run; and there, hiding itself, it whispers and coaxes and persuades. And by and by that under-nutriments invites; and up comes the grass, and out come the flowers; and once brought out by the power of the sun, they look up, and perhaps think they made the sun, because they now first see him on opening their eyes!

The spirit of the divine is humility, self-abasement, hiding, going under. It is the germinating power by which things are stimulated to develop according to their nature, and the life that is in them.

We are to die for our convictions, if need be; but we are never to make others die for them. It is not for me, that hold a philo-

sophy, and that believe in that philosophy as the life of the world, to beat down with my convictions other men; but I am so to transform my life that it shall tend to knit their sorrow and want with aspiration, and, acting in a thousand invisible ways, permeate them, develop them, stimulate their growth, and bring them up by the power of growing.

True authority over men is neither logical nor philosophic: it is emotive. My heart owns you. You are the slaves of my heart. Blessed is the slave of love. The babe is the slave of the mother. The child is the slave of the father. And when Love is the master, who does not want to be a slave? God so loved the world that he gave his Son for it; and we, following in his tracks, and accepting the truth with an intense moral conviction of its benefit, abounding with peace everywhere, shooting out bounty wherever we go, are, in the enthusiasm of the truth, to give ourselves to it, and die for it, if need be; never using it as an oppressor's rod, for others, but using it to teach them, and, by the power in the soul of gentleness, and goodness, and sweetness, and self-sacrificing love, to enable them to rise higher, grow broader, develop more.

Men say, "If we have the truth, ought we not to make men accept it?" Yes; but you ought not to make them accept it by every method—certainly not by the coarse and hard method of despotism. The grand element of divine truth, as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ, when it is stated at large, is most beautiful and eye-filling. Men who resist and resent the doctrine of the atonement, when it is stated in the orthodox form, open their hearts at once to that from which all the explanations of that doctrine are derived. The grand element of motherhood, and the grand element of God-hood, is that of one suffering for another. The quality of loving to suffer for the benefit of others—that is the fundamental element of the best side of human life, and the best revelation of the divine nature. "I came not to destroy men's lives," says the Master, "but to save them."

This intense moral conviction, that is urged by our Lord when he says we must hate father, and mother, and brother, and sister, rather than be false to our convictions—or that we must be true to our convictions rather than give up Christ as the epitome of truth, and goodness, and bounty—is not intolerant, and can not be intolerant.

"Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him because he followed not with us."

What saith the Master?

"He that is not against us is for us."

Men may not be on your side, but they may be going toward the same city where you are going, by a parallel route, or even by a circuitous route. Whenever a man has his face set as though he would go to Jerusalem, you have no right to question the method by which he shall go.

When from Upper Galilee men went to their three, and afterwards four great annual feasts at Jerusalem, some could go down along the plain by Joppa, some could go along the plain of Esdraelon and through Samaria, some could go along on the west side of the Jordan, and others could go through Perea and by Jericho. And it was not for a Jew who went along the Mediterranean to throw stones at the men who went to Jerusalem by the Sea of Galilee. Neither was it for those who took the middle path to criticise those who took the circuitous routes. They all went the right way so that they appeared in Zion and before God.

Now we are not to tolerate men on the ground of indifference to moral truth. It does not make the slightest difference in the world to men whether flax is rotted in the dew by exposure through nights and days in the field, or whether it is put into a vat and rotted by some chemical process; and shall they say that they are tolerant of the one or the other method? They do not bother themselves about these matters, nor think of them, nor care for them. There are a great many men who revile systems of religion, and say that churches are of no use; and yet they pride themselves on their toleration toward them. They tolerate churches because they would just as lief go to one as to another. It is a matter of indifference to them whether they go to a Roman Catholic church, or a Protestant church, or a church of any of twenty different sects. And I dare say they would just as lief stay at home as go to either of them. They do not care for either. And yet they call their attitude in regard to them toleration. I call it stupidity. I never tolerate anything that I am totally indifferent about. Toleration implies sensibility, choice, belief, and earnestness therein. Toleration is not a permission by which we, being grounded in the truth, and being made royal by it, are placed in authority over our fellow men. It is not a kind of charter which we give to them, saying: "We have the true way; but still, we permit you, on account of your weakness, to walk in it." Men's liberties are not in our hands. Men are not subject to us. I own no man except in proportion as I love him; and you own nobody that you do not love. No one has an ownership in the human race except God. "One is your Master, even Christ: and all ye are brethren." You have no permissions to give. You may ape tyranny in its gracious

moods; but men think by the same right that you do. Even if they think wrong, they think by the same right that you do. It is not therefore for you to interfere with their liberty in this regard. And toleration does not consist in a gracious courtesy. It is not for you to say: "Oh, we are the church; we are the orthodox people; we have the keys; we have the root; we have all that belongs to the truth; and yet, we are courteous, and will permit you outsiders to partake of the royal bounty which God has given to us." No, no; I accept no such charity at anybody's hands. I accept no charity for my head or for my heart. I am as much crowned as the bishop, or the priest, or the minister. There is no sect that can crown me. There is no body of men that can give me any permission. You might as well come to me and say, "I make you a present of day-light," as to offer to give me freedom of thought in matters of religion; and if a man should offer me the twilight I should say to him, "Thank you, sir: God made it when he made the sun. It is my sun, and not yours alone; and it is my twilight." You may own houses, and lands, and ships, and what not; but you cannot own me, or my freedom to think. God made me to think, and to be free in my thinking, with responsibility only to him, except so far as the organization of society requires some responsibility to it.

I derive my right in this matter, not as a courtesy, not as a charter of permission, not as if you had any right to interfere with it. I defy you, and stand in my own individuality, and say: "I am responsible to God: I admit that; but I am not responsible to you, nor to any crown, nor to any sectarian body."

What is toleration? It is an equity. It is a respect for other men's rights. It is a looking upon other people's consciences without judging them. It is a sympathy with men who are true to their consciences, which leads you to rejoice in them even if their consciences are not just what yours is. It is something grander than anything which belongs to ordinary experiences.

More than that, toleration is confidence in truth as such. It is such a sense of the reality of truth, and of its certitude, and of its accessibleness, that it believes that, though not to-day nor to-morrow, yet, in due time, the truth will most certainly be brought out. And if you believe that you have the truth, then you are the one, above every other, who can afford to let every other one think freely. If you are holding a conventional truth, of which you are not exactly certain, you will not be apt to desire that it shall be looked at too closely, or that it shall be probed too deeply, lest the foundations on which you stand may be taken away; but if you

believe in the truth, and it makes a part of your being, then you will be as certain as that God's throne will not be shaken, that the truth will not be damaged by any human looking at it. Let men think; and if their thinkings do not amount to any thing more, they will be, like the last year's leaves, manure for this year's growths. Let men think; and whether their thinkings are skillful or not, or wise or not, or strong or not, it is better that they should not be repressed. There is nothing that the world needs to guard so much as liberty in thinking, and freedom in expression. For, the moment you begin to shut the doors and windows, the stoves give forth their heat, and fevers spring from the unventilated rooms. While men thirst after truths; while their souls long to go into fellowship with the divine soul; while their hearts are touched with the spirit of the universal, and they feel something of the throbs of the infinite in themselves; while they feel that they are the sons of God; while God seeks them, and everything in them nobly responds to the call of God, and strives to find its way up to him in simplicity and with fidelity of conviction, you cannot afford to smother and confine them. They must have liberty, and largeness, and room.

But are there not mistakes made by the exercise of liberty in thinking? and is there not often harm produced by these mistakes? Momentarily there may be.

When I go into the field to cut wheat, and gather in my hands the clusters, and bring round the sickle, every stalk has reason to complain, and say, "Have I not done my duty? Have I not grown all summer long, and perfected my juices, and given my whole life to the work? See how I am turning yellow and ripening the wheat! Wherefore am I to be cut down?" "Because I want this seed to sow, that I may raise other harvests. That is why I cut you down. It is the damage which you sustain that is to be the life of the next harvest."

And so it is with men who believe. They ripen their mistakes, if they make mistakes; and these are to be sown again. The mistakes of men in one generation have constituted the seed-wheat of truths for the next generation. The heresies of one age are the orthodoxies of the next age. The infidelities of one period are the fidelities of another period. So the world has gone on opening and thinking, in chains, in bonds, and in gyves. Under all manner of hindrances men have thought; and much good has been wrought out by their thinking. But nothing ever had so hard a time in this world as the spiritual in man striving to get out of the reach of the material. It seems as though every man were born with a lion un-

der him, and an angel on him—and the angel has had a hard time!

Moral earnestness, as Christ taught it, then, is clear-thoughtedness in the whole realm of truth, as far as you can enter in. It is giving to it your confidence, your obedience, your personal conformity. It is impressing it upon others, by word or example, as something sweet and noble, and as something indispensable to their happiness. It is identifying yourself with truth as God's message, you being his messenger. It is having such a sense of its beauty as a gift of God, and of its worth as God's bounty, that you identify yourself with it and rise or fall as it rises or falls. So it is a pain and thorn, and yet a crown and joy.

The roots of all true belief, then, may be regarded in the sense in which I have now defined them. I believe that all divine being centers in love; and that all force, all justice, all pain-producing elements, all that is rigorous and exacting, is but the outworking of the central spirit of love in God. If I did not believe this, I would be an infidel; I would be an atheist; I would cover my head, and blind my eyes, and call for death, and die. And I would die thankfully, yea, even die forever, if God be *demoniac*; but if God be goodness, no matter what instrument he pleases to take for working out goodness, I will wait, and suffer, and take on pain, that by and by, though it be a thousand ages hence, I may stand in the center of love, and see the enigmas of time, and all its strange scenes, in panorama or drama, of sorrow or joy, opened up, and brought into an endless summer. But it is not in me to believe in vindictiveness on the part of God. The nearer I come to Christ the less I believe in suffering administered for the sake of suffering. I should have to go further and further from God to believe that pain for the sake of pain, or sorrow for the sake of sorrow, can be divine. Instrumental suffering—I hail it. Suffering for suffering's sake—I detest it; and I bring to the detestation every spark of indignation that has been kindled in my conscience by the cross, and by Him that hung thereon.

In view of the subject thus far opened—the nature of moral earnestness, and its identification with the whole realm of truth of every kind—I remark, first, that if it was ever proper for love to have contempt, it seems to me that it would be justified in visiting it upon those who are indifferent to the truth; who take life easy—who say that there is no truth, or that, if there is, we do not know what it is; who say that everything is uncertain; and who say to their soul, “Eat and drink.” That is it. Men have souls, and they do not know what to bring to them. So they bring bread and wine

to the soul, as if it had a mouth to eat such things as these!—not truth, not faith, not self-sacrifice, not heroism for the things that a man is, or believes, or hopes, or ventures.

I have the most profound sympathy for men who are unbelieving—that is, those who are in the process of untying things which have been tied. I do not believe in any greater trial than that in which they are placed by their childhood. Our beliefs are not written in a book. What I believe comes to me in the face of my mother. It comes to me in the scenes that I participated in with my brothers and sisters in my father's household. What I believe stands associated with the way in which Sunday used to seem on the old Litchfield-town hill, with the great over-arching crystal vault above, and a strange stillness broken only by the sounds which the birds made in the air. All those scenes of childhood went to the twisting up of the elements of my belief. And when I come to anything that I am constrained to say is not true, it is not my belief only that I am rooting out: it is my father; it is my mother; it is my brother; it is my sisters; it is my childhood imagination; it is me. I am lacerating a part of my very life. And when men, moved by their fidelity and truth, are passing over the weary desert way of untwining and unblending, they are to be pitied. If there are any men on earth that should be sympathized with and forborne with, it is the doubters, who are doubting that they may believe. It is they who through doubt are calling to God; who through the night are seeking the morning; who through the desert way are steering for the fruitful land. And on the other hand, if there be any class of men who are more void of respect than another, it is those who do not care anything about truth. The seasons come and go, the sun rises and sets, the tides of the sea roll in upon the shore and recede again; and they, not caring for the truth, nor for anything else but their own ease and comfort, go into the world, make bargains, create little bits of whirlpools, and ingurgitate all they can get, whirling in little eddies on the Amazon of life, or reclining on the bank of some brook, where they can fish and eat. And such degradation, gilded over with a sort of public respectability, is oftentimes a substitute for conscience, and honor, and manhood. Men who have no pulse; men who have no heart; men who stand on the clod, and do not know where the clod ends and where they begin; men who live contented with nothing but the clay—they are the respectable men who would burn you because you do not believe in their catechism. Men who would not sit down on the Bible, though they would violate every precept of it; men who believe in the outside of everything, and

in the inside of nothing—are not these the men who are to be pitied, because they are sodden in stupidity? But the men who doubt because they long for the truth; men who lift up in the darkness cries and tears to God for light; men that churches often frown upon; men who do not walk in your processions, and whose children are shut out from your schools; men who, after all, hear the voice of God though they cannot put into articulate sounds what he says or means—such men God loves; he is taking them through the wilderness, and the Jordan will open and let them into the promised land. Have compassion on doubters who are honest and earnest.'

But let no man take shelter under this. Let no man account himself as included in this catalogue who takes no pains, and who suffers nothing to solve doubt. Let no man suppose that this applies to him if he works none, sows none, reaps none, lives none. Life is an earnest business. The great fact to you in this universal realm is that you yourself live, and that you are what you are. Before you are all the issues of infinity; and you cannot afford to live in this world and be indifferent as to these issues. The existence beyond the present life is that on which men should put the most emphasis, and to which they should attach the most value.

I find it difficult not to have a feeling of contempt for the cynically skeptical. I want to love everybody; but I find it very hard to love a man who coldly dissects my Christ, that is to me more than my children, more than my wife, more than my innermost self, more than that self in its imaginations, and visions, and hopes of the future—who is to me the Chief among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. It was enough, to hustle him out of Jerusalem, and put a cross on him and crucify him. Even the Jews did not lay him on the dissecting table while he was yet alive, and with cold hand and ribald language dissect him. And when I see men, who pretend to be teachers of natural religion, take those truths which palpitate with a million sensibilities in a million hearts, and with a hard, skeptical spirit cut them up, there is where I am put to task. I think that sometimes, if I were taken at the right heat I could die for somebody; but I could not die for such men, I am afraid.

I had rather be fanatic in believing than a fanatic in doubting. Doubting and belief are brother and sister. They are to each other what night is to the day, and what day is to the night. The two together make the round day. The winter is as necessary to the joy of summer, as is the summer to the enjoyment of winter. All men do not dare to doubt, and do not dare out of doubt to work

belief. It is only to men who bring no heart and no humanity to the investigation of truth, and who are actuated by a base spirit of contempt for it, that I bring this rebuke. All hail to earnest, honest, sweet-minded men who are seeking the truth every where. All hail to the great army of men who are questioning the secrets of the material globe. All hail to the men who strike fire from many a rock, so that while they learn physical facts spiritual elements may flash out of them. All honor to that great band of men, who, in legislation, or in jurisprudence, or in schools, are finding out the truth of God in the relations of associated humanity. All honor to the great teaching band, from him who sits in the chair of the university giving to the noblest natures the last and best deductions of learning, all the way down to the poor threadbare woman who has exiled herself from her father's house to go among the slaves that were, to teach them out of her humility the love of humanity. Next to fathers and mothers, this great teaching band are God's most precious co-workers. All hail to the heroism of maiden sisters who are seeking to win to Christ children that they did not bear. All hail to the obscure who use that which is sweet in their own nature to sweeten life in humble places. All hail to those who, though they may not know it, are following after Christ, and are witnesses for Christ.

Has not the earth longed enough for better times? Is not God bringing in his kingdom, not by observation, not by orthodoxy, not by enthroned priests, but in a manner corresponding to that in which his Son came into the world, who was born of a peasant, and laid in a manger? Is not God, by universal humanities, by tender fidelities, by all that belongs to religion, by all that belongs to the schools, by all that belongs to patriotism, by all that belongs to the inflamed hearts of scientific men who are earnestly seeking after God in history and in nature—is not God by these things bringing in that kingdom in which dwelleth righteousness?

I believe in the historic Christ. I believe in the theologic Christ. I believe all that the schools do—modified however. That which they believe seems to me but a handful of the truth. I believe more than they believe. The bounds run out to the uttermost. My soul takes hold upon the universal, upon the infinite, and therefore upon the divine itself. And I rejoice that God rules over men in spite of them, restraining the wrath, and causing the remainder thereof to praise him, and that he is bringing forward that great day when all shall be glorified, justified, sanctified and saved.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR Father, bring us into the fellowship of those that behold thee, that see thy power, that are taught in the inward man of thy existence and of thy nature; for we are dwelling afar off in a land of clouds and of darkness; and what time we think we behold thee, and are filled with joy, already we see clouds coming upon the horizon that shut thee out again. We have life, with all its cares and duties, with all its light and darkness, with all its fears and temptations, with all its selfishness and pride; and how to carry our souls so that they shall be even; how to conform our life, that is beaten upon by so many storms, to our thought of life and to our wish of life—this tasks us every day. If we were shut up to ease and comfort, and shielded on every side, we might do better, though we should prove weak; but we are not. All thy winds are let down upon us, and all the earth has its way with us, in summer and in winter, in seed-time and in harvest. All troubles come; all solicitations and vehement persuasions come; all fears and strivings come. Multiform are the influences which come in on every side, and our souls are sensitive to everything that speaks to them; and we are drawn hither and thither; and are often cast away from family restraints, and from influences and thoughts of God; and are tried vehemently with poverty, and yet more with the temptations of riches. We are tried in prosperity and in adversity; in living and in death; in aspirations and in yearnings, which tend to breed contempt for things that are. We are met by rude overthrows which bring us down to the reality of things, and make us almost ashamed of aspiration. And behold, at times how we wallow! Behold again, how we sing not far from the gate of heaven! Tossed about thus, we are sometimes upon the mount of transfiguration, and sometimes in the valley where demons rage. Now we are strong and confident, and then weaker than water. Dost thou not remember us? Dost thou forget us? Wherefore are we cast about? Wherefore, at times, do we doubt thee and thine—yea, almost being itself—and wonder if we be more than dreams that wander through the air. O thou that knowest the deep things of the spirit, are we not in all these things in thine heart? and are not all these things the touches of life itself, and of God therein, by which, by and by, we shall be brought forth? O Lord, we ask not release, but only thy moulding hand. Yet, when the day is short, and the air is too much for us, shield us. Give us at least this thought, that thou knowest us. Take not from us the thought that thou art. Cast us not into the wretchedness of orphanage. Separate us not from faith in thee. May we never be so far from thee that we cannot feel thy heart. And though thou dost not answer back to us in the words which we utter to thee, though we have not now the hand which thou didst often put in the hands of thy disciples, and upon those whom thou didst heal, grant us that knowledge of thee which comes to the inner man. May we rise into that spiritual sensibility, that sensitiveness of conscience, by which we shall feel thee as a Spirit, though we cannot discern thee by the outward vision. And so may we have our life in thee, and thy life in us. And may we have patience to wait for our birth, and know that there is a better life, and that we are working toward it, and that no development is amiss; that no care is too much; that there is no attrition that has not its mission for us. Grant that we may have this evidence of being on the royal way; that there may come times of peace with the fulfillment of duty; and that we may be hedged in from evil. May we rejoice; and may our rejoicing comfort those who have not our joy. If we have less severe times than others, may we be captains for them as well as victors for ourselves. If thou hast given us the light and power of thought and refinement, may we think for the dull, and may we hold forth our light to those

who are in twilight and darkness. May we behold what is the mystery and majesty of brotherhood among men. And we pray that nothing which brings joy or sorrow to our fellows may be thought unworthy of our sympathy and of our regard. We pray that we may be joined to one another. As drops of blood unite and course through our veins to bring life, so may thy people learn to be united, and to be, as it were, the blood of the world. And we pray, O Lord, that this spirit of unity may be full of knowledge, and full of fidelity, and full of truth, and full of courage, and full of patience. Grant that there may be a manhood in Christ Jesus which shall make the name of Christ glorious before men. But thou must stoop again, and every day, to lift up thy little ones. Thou must continually be our Life. When thou art not present, our courage goes, and we faint by the way. It is thy hand that has unbarred the truth. It is thou that hast made manhood seem so much to us that we never can attain unto it; but we see how with thine influence thou hast hedged us around. Thou knewest that we were too proud, and thou didst tread our pride under foot by the majesty of thy death, and by thy risen glory in the heavenly land. By all these, thou didst overcome evil for us as thou didst for thyself, and as thou hast for all creatures.

We pray that thou wilt lead us more and more in confident faith; more and more in sympathetic relations with thee. Look upon thy servants that are before thee—all of them, and each one of them—in all their relations; and have compassion on them. What are we whose hearts are as stone pleading thee, that art a God of pity, whose pity is in all the heavens, and whose mercies are in all the earth? And yet, thou hast taught us to plead with thee, and encouraged us to urge thee; and we do it reverently, with a humble heart, and with a grateful sense of how thy thoughts of mercy run immensely beyond ours, and how we are as the voice of babes calling to manhood and to Godhood. Have compassion, we pray thee again, upon all that are in thy presence; and encourage those who are dying for lack of courage; and give rebuke to those who are growing too proud; and open the better way to those who are living selfishly and cincturing themselves about with comforts in life; and awaken sympathy in those who are of a hard and stony heart, that they may open the rock again and pour forth streams in the desert.

Grant, we pray thee, that those who are in the midst of the cares and affairs of life may have patience administered to them. Open their horizon, and let them see the relation between the life that they now live, with its trials, and the better life which is to come.

Draw near to all those who are in sorrow. May they be willing to bear pain and suffering long continued, if need be, until it shall have done its work. Grant, we pray thee, that those who are bereaved, and stand thinking not so much of themselves as of others, and reflect upon the great work which, on the sea and on the land, death is doing, may be comforted. How many are there that are heart-broken! But thou, who knowest life and death, thou who knowest all things, and art the Comforter, draw near to the children of sorrow, and manifest thyself to them, that they may not grieve as those who have no hope. We pray that all the ministrations of trouble in our households may be as clouds on which the sunshine paints all the colors of hope and cheer. We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant more and more strength to those who need strength.

Grant that those who are strangers among us, and are homesick, may find brotherhood in nearness to thee, and in a faith that shall clasp thy promises. May they find those consolations which can be found nowhere out of the house of God—the home of the soul. Let thy blessings fill their households, and preserve all that they have left behind.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are laboring for the public welfare, even in the most humble spheres. Be with our teachers, and with all those who go forth to read thy word in desolate homes; and those who find their way as messengers of mercy to prison houses and hospitals and the by-ways of life; and those who are using their wealth and enlightenment for the comfort of those who are about them. Inspire these good works, and the spirit out of which they spring. Minister to it yet more abundantly.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon the instrumentalities for good throughout our whole land—upon schools and colleges; upon newspapers and books, and those that make them. And we pray that there may be more and more heroism and patriotism; more and more love of intelligence and truth; more and more of the spirit of charity and of justice; more and more of that spirit which fears God and loves man. We pray that ignorance may be purged out from us, and that the day of intelligence may be more and more bright, until the glowing noonday thereof. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us not to love ourselves alone, nor our own people alone, but all men, for Christ's sake. May nations feel their kinship. May they no more sit over against each other to destroy. May they no more lay snares and dig pits. May the sounds of woe and the reasons of woe cease in all the earth. We beseech of thee that despotisms and oppressions may come to an end; that ignorance, which weakens men, may pass away; and that all men may know thee, whom to know aright is life eternal, as well as joy and happiness here. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

O God of much patience, we cannot understand thee. Thy thunder we understand. We understand the stroke of thine hand. We understand the majesty of thy judgments in long processions. We find in our carnal natures something by which we reduce them to the measure of ourselves; and then we conceive of them. It is thy gentleness, thy patience and long-suffering, that we cannot understand. How thou hast waited for the world! How thou hast borne with the generations of men! If to our dull eye and insensitive nerve the world has been so strange a scene, and so full of affecting things, what must it have been to thine eye and heart! Thou didst not die upon Calvary. Thou hast been the eternal sacrifice. It is in thy heart that the sacrifice goes on; and love-suffering is with thee evermore. Thou art leading, and thou art guarding the race. We worship thee, Supreme Love. All bounty is with thee. All truth, and all patience, and all long-suffering are steering universal affairs toward the consummation of righteousness. Thou art drawing men away from the earth, and the beast toward heaven and the angel. Thou art working and winning, and carrying those who are dear to thee up toward the eternal sphere. Even so, Lord Jesus, live on. Still pursue thy work. Bear the thorns which men still plant upon thy brow. Bring us at last into that royal realm of victory where we shall see the print of thy suffering. And at last we will cast our crowns at thy feet, saying, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, be the glory forever and forever. *Amen.*

SOUL-SIGHT.

"Jesus saith unto him: Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." John xx., 29.

You will remember the circumstances. After the resurrection of Christ, he was seen of the women, then of a few disciples, and then of a great many; the report was noised abroad; and the absent disciples were informed by their fellows that they had seen the Lord, that he was risen from the dead; and though they were bewildered, they seemed to have accepted the testimony, Thomas only standing out. He declared that he would not believe unless he could put his very hand in the very wound, and know that it was indeed He. And so, at a gathering of the disciples, our Master was pleased to call Thomas to him, and to propose to him the very tests that he had demanded. And then, overwhelmed with conviction, Thomas cries out, "My Lord, and my God!" It was impetuous belief then. And Christ says to him: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

We are to take into consideration this fact: that Thomas had consorted with the Saviour, and was not unfamiliar with events that were as remarkable as the resurrection of Christ. He was in the ship, and saw him walking on the water. He was with the disciples, and saw the demons cast out in Gergeza among the Gadarenes. He had seen at Nain the widow's child brought to life again. He had been with them when the ruler's son was restored from death to life. It was not an altogether unfamiliar thing to him. So that when his Master was reported to have been himself raised from the dead, there was no need of such extreme incredulity. We might perhaps pardon some bewilderment and hesitation in a nature that was cautious by its structure; but persistent incredulity had no real excuse in his case. He was asked to believe a fact which he knew was not incredible, because he had seen just such facts. He was asked to believe it on the

testimony of his fellow disciples. He was not asked to explain it. He was not asked to believe in the whole mystery of the divine power so strangely shown here, but in the fact thus witnessed to by the women, and by his co-disciples.

Nevertheless, you will observe that our Master did not rebuke Thomas; yet he ranked him. He did not say to him that he was deserving of any penalty or punishment, but simply said: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." That is to say, the state of believing is a higher one than the state of doubting. That condition of mind by which one believes a thing, even if he have not seen it, is a higher state of mind than that incredulity which refuses to believe until one has seen. And still further, that state of the mind where it is opened up to spiritual intuitions, and convictions that are supersensuous, is a higher state than that which demands that all spiritual truth and evidence should be brought down to the bounds and reasons of sensuous, material truth. The soul has its own laws of evidence independent of those which are addressed to the senses, important as the senses are, and important as the laws of evidence are. Although they are indispensable, in our present condition and in the present structure of society, they are not the highest nor the best things.

This subject of believing what we do not see is one that has a great deal of pertinency to thousands of people who do not talk about it. There are thousands and thousands of persons who are sincere in a measure, and in a certain way, and who have a general belief in the existence of God, but who after all have most serious trouble with themselves. They cannot see him. They have never seen him. He does not come to them through any of those channels through which they are accustomed to gather knowledge. He does not present himself within the range of those tests by which we are accustomed to divide between realities and appearances, between truth and the semblances of truth.

Men say,—and feel oftener than they say,—“Is it possible that there can be a God? Is it probable that there would be a God who would not show himself once in a whole life-time, when it would amount to so much? When it would do us so much good if we could have but one hour or one moment of such condescension as that God should reveal himself to our senses, how strange it is that we never see him!” We never do see him. We never hear him. In our utmost exigencies, in our intensest longings, in our extremest anxieties, we call out and are never answered. We

go forward, and he is not there; backward, and we find him not. And men say, "Is it probable that God is the Father and Governor of men, and that he actually exists, and that generations come up, and live on, and form characters on which their destiny is determined, and that he never shows himself to them?" Unbelief makes this very plausible; sorrow makes it very poignant oftentimes; and persons who have been for scores of years believers, so far as they have known, drop into a slough of trouble; and then, when they feel that heart and flesh have failed them, and that they need something more, and when they have called to God and nothing succors them, they fall into weeks and months of skepticism, and say, "There is no God." There is nothing more common in deep natures than an extreme skepticism following extreme suffering, though they rebound from it by and by, usually, if they have true faith, and have had religious culture of the right sort. But for the time being it seems like an obliteration of all the agencies of an over-ruling Spirit.

I shall not undertake to say why this is; but I will suggest a few things which may perhaps assist your doubting thoughts.

It is probable, I judge, that the divine nature cannot be expressed by matter, and that it cannot therefore be subject to the laws or evidences which matter requires. If the divine nature and existence were so reduced as to be understandable through our senses, it would cease to be divine. It may be asked, "How, then, did God manifest himself in Christ?" My reply is, that he laid aside the divine glory, and that you do not see God when you see Christ. You only see glimpses of him. You see only his qualities. You see a certain nature which belongs to him; but not the whole of him. Christ was encompassed, shrouded, obscured, for certain great moral purposes, and was sufficient as showing to men the divine disposition and the divine nature; but that he was the original and full-orbed glory of God he never pretended for himself; and no such pretension was set up for him. He did express God in his essential nature and substance so far as to represent the divine feelings toward men; but that was all.

The controversies of Christ and the Pharisees are very instructive on this point. The last month of our Saviour's life was spent near Jerusalem; he was often in the temple; and there he was questioned by the educated Pharisees and Sadducees. He demanded that they should accept him as divine; and they refused, and said: "We know where you were born; we know who your relations are; and we shall not receive you as divine. What do you do? Where is your evidence?" And what was the reply of

the Saviour? Said he, "Because ye are not of God, ye will not accept me. Because ye have not in you that spiritual instinct or intuition by which the divine is recognized; because you apply to me the laws of historic evidence; because you judge me by the senses—by the eye and the ear; because you measure me by the lower forms of evidence, you do not perceive my divinity."

No man can test poetry by a mathematical formula. Poetry must have its own formula by which it shall be tested. And, said the Saviour: "No man can test me by physical exponents. He who would understand me must have a spiritual nature, and must have spiritual intuition." It is a higher form of evidence that is demanded for the recognition of divinity. Said Christ: "Believe me. I am of God, and if ye were of God you would know it, and feel the harmony between that which is divine in you and in me. And if you are not able to do this, then believe me for my works' sake,—come down one step more, to another plane of evidence, believe me for my miracles—from a feeling of wonder.

It is probable that those faculties which hunger most for the sight of God are not our highest ones. The occasions for our desiring to have some near sight of the divine Being may spring from the wounding of our best feelings; but after all, those feelings may lead us to desire it as hunger springs from our external selves, and not from our deepest internal selves. We long to behold God through the senses; but that is not possible. That which we could handle with the hand, or see with the eye, or hear with the ear, would not be a God, but would be a body like our own. It is not possible to bring within the comprehension of our lower nature the substance and essence of that which constitutes the divine Being.

We have analogies of this. Take one of the noblest of men, and attempt to expound him to one of the lowest. That which goes to constitute the essential manhood and admirableness of a great nature would be just that which would escape the recognition of an Indian, or of a Hottentot, or of an Ethiopian fresh from his kraal. The highest forms of manhood are not understandable by the lower forms of animalhood in man.

You see what is true in respect to men, if you carry it out, is true everywhere. For example, there can be no doubt that a dog has the instinct of intelligence. No man who is familiar with dogs, who has studied them, and made them companions, can doubt for a moment that there is in them an intelligence which is substantially of the same nature as ours, which by development becomes reason, and philosophic reason of the highest form. You

can make a dog understand one, and two, and three, perhaps; you can interpret to him, it may be, some of the smaller ideas which men have; but would you undertake to introduce Lord Bacon or Shakespeare to a dog? Basilar facts, a few of the lower ideas, you can make a lower animal understand; but there the power of its faculties stops. As you go up to the highest manhood, to the noblest and best things, the distance between them and animalhood becomes greater and greater. Suppose a dog (and some human beings might be put in the same category) should look up and say, "I have had some intimation that there is a great nature in man; why does he not show it to me?" Because you are a dog, and it cannot be got into dogs. They are not developed enough.

And so it is with regard to the ability of men to comprehend God. It would transform divinity to bring it under the laws of the senses; and, on the other hand, it would transform the human faculties to enlarge them enough to make them capable of understanding, in any degree of fullness, the divine nature, it is so much larger, not only, but finer than they are. Quality enters into it, and not mere quantity. It is in the matter of fruitfulness so different from our nature, and so far beyond that which we are accustomed to deal with, that we are by reason of undevelopment unable to comprehend it. In the lower stage of the development of our being, we have not the power to form anything like an adequate conception of God.

It is impossible to interpret to our rational faculties anything that is lower than we are. You are as far separated from the fly as though he were a million, million, million miles off from you—not by space as every summer proves! but so far as any knowledge which you have of him or he has of you is concerned. You do not know how a fly feels, any more than a fly knows how you feel. You may say, "I cannot transmute my intelligence down to him;" but no more can he transmute his sensations up to you. There is an impassable gulf between you and the things which are below you and cannot be transmuted, as well as between you and things that are above you and cannot be transmuted. There are worms, sparrows, birds, myriads of things, around us and underneath us, and we behold them and recognize their existence, and comprehend them so far as they address themselves to our senses; but we do not understand their nature; and they do not understand ours. What am I to a fly, but something that is going to slap him? What am I to a bird but some creature with a net or gun seeking his destruction? It does not dawn upon him that I am a living, thinking, spiritual being. He has no conception of the qualities of my

nature. And they cannot be interpreted to him. That which constitutes manhood is something higher than the mere physical goes.

Now, carry this analogy upward. God fills infinite space. He transcends in power of faculty, and in absolute perfection, anything that we can form an idea of. And from the beginning of the Old Testament down to the last word of the New, there is no one thing more perpetually insisted upon than the impossibility of by searching to find out or understand the Almighty to perfection. That is nowhere to be found in the Bible which is contained in our system of trig and prig theology, where men burn each other for the ten thousandth part of the variation of a hair, as it respects the divine government, or the divine nature; or where there is a perpetual quarrel between the different denominations as to how high up or how low down Christ is, orthodoxy turning on the utmost accuracy of knowledge in regard to these things. There is nothing of this kind in the Word of God. The Saviour did not rebuke and condemn, in his own time, those who were not accurate in belief or judgment. A want of emotive affinity, a want of heart-love, a want of spirituality—this was what they were blameworthy for: not a want of right intellectual conceptions of divinity. To hear some men talk you would think they supposed that there was nothing more certain than that they knew all about God. You know no more about God than a babe does about its mother. Do you say, "What is the use of a babe's haying a mother if it does not and cannot understand her?" Does not a child know enough of its mother to prove to it that she is something lovable?

I remember very well when I was but two years old (strange as it may seem: sometimes I think I spent all my remembering power on that early period!) finding myself in the east entry of my father's great house, alone, coming down stairs, or trying to. The sudden sense which I had of being alone frightened me, and I gave one shriek; and then the echo of my voice scared me worse, and I gave another shriek that was emphatic; and I remember seeing the light stream in from the dining-room, and being taken up by loving hands. The face I do not recall; the form I do not recall; but I remember the warm pressure. It was my mother, who died when I was three years old. She took me to her bosom. I recollect sitting by the side of some one who made me feel very happy; and I recollect seeing my father's swart face on the other side of the table.

Now I could not paint my mother's face; but I know how her bosom felt. I know how her arms felt. I have a filial sense, a

child's interpretation, of motherhood. It was only an emotion or instinct in me; but it was blessed.

And so it is with the soul's interpretation of God. It is not able to lift itself up to all the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the glory of God, or to understand it; but that the soul has a filial instinct which teaches it something of God: that it has a yearning after the divine beneficence and care and love; that it has faith that there is a Being who is just, true, bountiful, self-sacrificing and ineffable in goodness—whatever that goodness may prove to be; that it loves that Being; that it has a sense, not so much of a quantitative as of a qualitative Being; and that its thoughts and feelings concerning the divine Being are conglomerated or interfiliated together, forming one conception—this we can understand. But we cannot understand what is meant. That is where a man's ideas are outrun. That is the point at which men's thoughts stop. No man's reason can go further than that. When it comes to the question of what "God" means, we are dealing with a subject which involves the sum total, the scope, the volume of the divine nature; and this is beyond human comprehension. Our knowledge of God as respects his individuality, as compared with our knowledge of each other, may be sadly imperfect; but there is that in the heart of every man which needs a God, and interprets to itself so much of God as it is competent to understand. It is the heart, crying out, "Abba, Father," that interprets God to us. And the sense, the faith of God present, is the result of faculties higher than the eye or the ear.

I suppose some of you say, "If I could only have eye-sight of God once, it would be a great help to me." I think it very probable that you do have eyesight of God. I think it probable that you look on God every time you look upon anything. "Oh but, if he would only speak to me, if I could have ear-evidence of his existence, what a satisfaction it would be!" I think it probable that God does speak to every one of us. "Well, why do we not know it?" When you take a pin, and lacerate the muscle, it aches. We say that the muscle aches; but no, it is the nerve that aches. Take out the nerve and then prick the muscle; and it does not ache. You may prick it and cut it as much as you please, and it will not feel any pain. So that which is evidence to nerve is not evidence to muscle. Nerve and muscle each have their own laws of evidence and their own modes of proof.

Stop the ears and play a beautiful tune before the eyes. A man says, "There is a tune going through the air all the time; I wish I could see it." But can a man see a sound? Can the eye accept

evidence that is addressed to the ear? Or *vice versa*; apply to the ear a picture. Can a man take in at the ear that which addresses itself to the eye? Can the ear act according to the law of evidence which is applicable to the eye?

Now, God is not amenable to the evidence that lies in the eye that sees, or the ear that hears, or the hand that touches. Nothing spiritual can be apprehended by any laws which come down to the horizon of finiteness and the flesh. The eye for this stage of existence, but not for the other. The ear for matter, but not for the spirit. The hands for things visible, but not for things unseen.

I doubt not that choral music is chanted, sweeping magnificently through the air in praise to God; but who hears it? Sometimes, at the hush of twilight, I have almost thought I did; but it has vanished in thinking. Doubtless there are songs sung that we could hear if our inward nature were only open to take them in, which would be as the Mount of Transfiguration to us; but they fall unheard because we are not in a condition to hear them.

When the prophet's servant was stricken with fear lest they should be overwhelmed, the prophet touched his eye; and he saw the mountains and the heavens filled with angels and chariots. And do you suppose that when there are such vast myriads of existent creatures, they are not near to us? Do you not suppose they are in our dwellings, and in the air, and around us, and that they go past us and over us? And yet we never see them. It is not for the eye to see spirits. It is not for the ear to hear spirits. It is not for the hand to handle spirits. Doubtless God is present in his beneficences. He is present, doubtless, not merely in the fruit of his thought, but in his personality—whatever that may be. We cannot form the least conception of it. We may conjecture what it is, for purposes of practical use, but that which we imagine it to be is only a figment of the imagination for this temporary object. It is a legal fiction, as it were. I doubt not that when we are saying, "Oh! that I might see my God," he is before us, and not far from any one of us. He is in the heaven above; he is in the earth beneath; he is in the waters under the earth; and though you take the wings of the morning, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, he is there. Though you make your bed in *Hades*, he is there. Wherever the thought of man can penetrate, there is God. And when you use these eyes to behold him, you do not see him, because the fleshly eye cannot see spirits, whatever they may be. If you come to look at it thus minutely, we are surrounded with God. He declares that we are in him; that he abides with us; that he comes to us, and makes his dwelling with us.

We long for a vision of God. Oh fools! that long to see God, as if he were in the body, and we did not know that the eye by which we see invisible things is deeper than the external eye! It is the soul's eye, it is the spiritual eye, it is what is called *faith* in the New Testament, it is our inner vision, that brings God near to us.

Now, do we see him by this inner vision? Are we really able to discern him through its instrumentality? This is a question which turns on a matter of fact. We represent to ourselves the personality of God. It is not a question of whether we can or cannot. I do it, and so do you. I do not say that we do it accurately; but there is a sense of God present with us; and it is a sense of God present in personal quality, rather than as an abstract attribute, or as a definite form. The divine presence is warm to the touch. We know that God is near, because we rise up in our feelings to greet him. There are a thousand noble thoughts which come to us in our better moods; and we can trace them to God. Water never rises heavenward unless it is drawn up by the sun, by reason of the warmth of its beams. Were it not for the drawing of the sun, no clouds would be formed, and no rain would fall. And I believe that if it were not for the presence and influence of the divine nature, the social and moral qualities which go to make manhood would not be developed. I believe that those divine influences which draw out these qualities are food for the higher nature of man; and that that higher nature responds to the touch of God; and that to all those who lift up their souls God is present, and in some moods and moments with overwhelming evidence, most satisfying and most blessed. It is, then, in the power of men to understand personality, although they may not know accurately how to make it up, to frame it, and give it definite bounds. That God is a person who thinks and feels, we learn from ourselves. We take our own qualities and transfer them to him. It is in the power of people to clothe God with personality by elements which are in them, though not in the same measure that belongs to them when they are applied to him. God is true; he is loving; he is long-suffering; he is disinterested; he is self-sacrificing. We know the qualities which go to make up the divine nature. But these same qualities may make a nature in a thousand different forms. The kind of nature which they produce is determined by their proportions and their fruitfulness. We know what these qualities are, but we do not know the grandeur of their ultimate form.

When I was last on the top of Mount Washington, where the snow was lying on the ground, and where the winds

sweep bitterly, both summer and winter, I found some squatting shrubs, almost barren of evergreen leaves. Twisted, contorted, dwarfed trees they were, beaten down, and kept down, by the wind and by the winter; but I saw on them, here and there, a tassel or a leaf which showed that they were black-spruce. And as I went down a thousand feet, I found that the shrubs went up. As I descended from this high elevation, and the climate became milder and milder, the trees increased in height until they were as tall as I am. A little further down they were taller; and still further down they were taller yet; and away down in the lowlands they shot eighty feet into the air. When I first saw these shrubs on the top of the mountain I knew that they were black-spruce; but when I saw them up there I had no idea of what black-spruce was down at the bottom. I understood by its leaf and by its wood what it was up there; but I did not know what the difference in the development of the black-spruce tree was in these different places. It was the same in essence and substance in one place that it was in the other; but how different was it in breadth and height and majesty!

I know what it means to love; but I have no conception of what love is when it rolls in the bosom of an infinite God. I know what the feeling is to forgive iniquity; but what conception have I of the mercy of Him who, from age to age, sitting upon the circle of the earth watching the numberless imperfections of miserable men, shines through them all and still forgives? I know what light is as it shines from my candle, but do I know what the sun is, from that? I know what water is when I take a drop of it in my tumbler; but do I know the thunder of the ocean from that? I know that when I see God he will be wise; but how little do I know of the wisdom of God! I know that he will be just and merciful; but how little do I know of his justice and mercy? I know that he will be a God of love, but oh, how little do I know of the extent and grandeur of that love! How imperfect are my slender ideas as means by which to fashion, lift up, augment, enlarge and carry out this supremest attribute of the infinite and eternal God! It is by these qualities that I know my God; but I know him only by specimens, by small samples. My conceptions of him are imperfect. I know him, and I do not know him. He is present with me; I see him in myself and in others; and yet I see him only as through a glass darkly. Who that is finite can form any adequate conception of a God of such purity and sweetness and volume as the God whom we worship?

In view of these interpretations and suggestions, I remark, first, that it is for us to form a healthful conception of God by carrying

up to it all that we can see of him among men, or experience of him in ourselves. I do not mean to make a fanciful use of the phrase, "Christ in you the Hope of Glory"; but, after all, it shadows a truth which I wish to emphasize—the truth that there is to you only so much of God as there is in you. You will understand no more of him than you have of him in your nature.

A man who is absolutely without a musical instinct can form no conception of a musician. A man who is absolutely without courage can form no conception of a hero. A man who is absolutely without avarice cannot tell how a miser feels. A man who is without any sense of honor or truth cannot conceive how an honorable man feels.

You judge of the nature of God from the best things that are in you. The fault of heathenism is, that men, not being developed spiritually, build God out of their fleshly nature, and so build idols. If men, a little more developed, have no higher elements within them from which to build, they can only build from their lower passions; and so they have fiendish, warlike gods. And as men grow more and more noble, and become developed in their higher spiritual nature, they build with right materials, and begin to touch right conceptions of God. If you would know more of God as a reality, let him be more personal to you. Bring more from your own moral consciousness to your conception of him. Judge of him by the things in you that are noblest, and sweetest, and best. See what things are heroic among men of the highest pattern of heroism, and apply them to him. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things," said the Apostle. Whatsoever things you may garner or perceive of the noblest experiences of human life, although they are inadequate materials with which to form a conception of God, they are the best materials with which you can begin to form a conception of him which shall be to you vital, vivid, satisfying.

The God of the Book may help you; the God of the Catechism may help you; the God of philosophy may be helpful to you in certain ways; but, after all, your God springs out of your moral consciousness. It is that which vivifies it and which is to make much of it.

The conception of God, then, demands that we should use our best faculties and our best moods. It is in the direction of moral emotion and exalted imagination that the evidence lies of the

presence and reality of God. What man after a debauch would sit down with a microscope to pursue some critical and exceedingly difficult examination? What man, when his eyes were diseased and inflamed, would sit down as an astronomer to make delicate tests in regard to the transit of Venus across the sun? We bring to scientific investigations our ripest powers and best moods. Who writes poetry when he is rushing through the streets in a car? If a man wishes to write poetry, does he not wait till his highest inspirations are upon him, and then draw himself aside from society, and let his mind ripen in that one direction, and then reap the fruit?

In all other things except spiritual, we dedicate to the class of faculties which we bring into requisition, time and opportunity. You cannot take all things along with you. You cannot give your best thought and your best strength to your business and to the world, and then with the leavings worship God acceptably to him, or in a manner that shall be satisfying to your own soul. Do you hustle through a little catechetical service or a few prayers at stated periods, and then wonder that you have no God? Do you draw near to God as a man should? Do you take those days and hours in which the soul seems ready to fly heavenward like a bird that has crouched on a branch and spread its wings, and is ready to lift itself up in the air, and devote them to God? Do you give yourself by fasting, or if not by fasting by temperance, which is always better, to the noblest exercises of the mind, as a preparation for communion with him? Do you bring your mind to that point of observation by which the noblest ideas to which you are capable of rising are to be gained in order that you may come into sympathy with God?

You go groaning and grumbling up and down the street, and say, "I do not see any evidence of a God. It does not seem to me as though there was any use of basing a hope on a supposition that there is a God. I cannot taste him. I cannot touch him. I cannot see him. Everything goes wrong. There is no moral government anywhere. Everything goes clish-clash, clish-clash. We are tossed about in the world like a skiff on the waves of the sea. I do not believe in a God." Is that the way,—to settle down and feed your skepticism until it benumbs your higher nature? Is that the way,—to take your basilar self and judge of things divine by that? Let a man take a telescope, and reverse it, and how far off things seem! and let a man reverse his own nature and look through it the wrong way,—how impossible it is for him to see God! He is too far off anyhow; and that throws

him hopelessly beyond all reach. The hours in which your highest faculties are most active, and your truest, your best, your noblest ideas are uppermost—those are the hours which you are to give to your God. Do you believe you could give from day to day, in the early morning or in the musical hush at evening, when your thoughts are ripest and richest, one hour to a contemplation of God, and to a sense of the divine presence, and live in doubt? Let there be one hour in every day that is its sanctuary. Let there be one such hour in every twenty-four, and if a man stand in it, God will be there, and make himself known to him. It requires but little. One throb that says “Mine,” and hears again, “Thine,” is enough.

Why, between those who love most is it necessary that every day there should be a running through the full ceremony of a declaration of love? Is it necessary that there should be the timid approach, the shrinking back, the dropping of the eyes, the hesitation to speak, and the overflowing utterance? No. When one loves, and loves strongly and truly, it takes but a turning of the eye, or a pressure of the hand, to show it. Silence is often more vocal than speech. It takes but little to testify to love. And the soul that is open to the entrance of God’s Spirit need not search as for hid treasures for evidence of the divine presence. It does not need to build a tabernacle for itself.

Every day there are hours which are like the dome of heaven, crystalline, through which the soul may see, and through which it may hear something say, above all scientific evidence, and all other evidence, “Thy Lord and thy God.”

O sad souls, that have no God that is a comforting God! O souls that have no God to help them lift their burdens! O souls that have a technical God, but no personal God present, so that when they walk down into the dark places—into the valley and shadow of death—his rod and his staff do not comfort them! O souls that have learned to say, “God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Ghost,” but are dying for want of God, for want of love, for want of clasping certainty, for want of intense realization!—for you there is this God. You may as well blind your eyes, and say, “There is no sun”; or, you may as well hide yourself in the hard streets of the city, and say, “There are no sweet and tender vines, there is no fresh grass, and there are no beautiful flowers, in the fields,” as to say, “There is no such thing as a God of love and sympathy.” O children of the humble and sorrowing, this is true; and you are the ones to whom God is nearest and most blessed!

I commend you, then, not to doubt and despondency. I commend you to belief and hope. Seek not to apply to spiritual things the criticisms and evidences which belong to materiality. Believe that you are something more than a body. Believe that the soul has a hunger of its own. Believe that it has intuitions which are based upon certain laws of evidence which belong to it, and which interpret truly, and that they are to be depended upon. Take that evidence which addresses itself to the soul. Lift yourself up to God, and remember that while you are striving, God is helping you. Remember that though "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," "the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

There is not a daisy that knows the way above the soil till the sun draws it; and there is not a soul that knows the way to God until Christ has interpreted him to it. Christ was a specimen of that which is the royalty and grandeur of the infinite eternity of God. A God who would rather suffer than have us suffer is calling us up through trials, through sorrows, through manifold experiences, to make us rich, ripe and ready for seeing him as he is when the clouds pass away, and the body falls, and the soul goes forth, not a lonely pilgrim, but welcome and rejoicing as a child of God, to dwell with him forever and forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR heavenly Father, we have much need of thee; and thou hast need of us, in loving. It is thy nature to love the poor, the helpless, the dependent. Thou art Father; and thou dost look down through the infinite space that separates between us and thee, to behold, with compassion, our low estate, and to lend something of thyself to us, that we may grow to that stature of God which we shall forever approach, and never reach. We rejoice that the sources of life are in thee, and not in ourselves. Though thou hast been pleased to permit us to minister and to serve, thou art thyself the Cause and the Power; and forth from thee comes that impulse which kindles ours; the light of our thought is kindled by thine; and thou dost work in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure; so that we are joined to thee in all our work; and our life is but the fringe of thine.

We rejoice that thus we are united by thy counsel and by thy plans to thee, and are grouped around thee. When thou art furthest from our thought, thou art still near; and when thou seemest least to us, thou art still God over all, blessed forever.

We are not sorry for this dependence. We are glad that we are not to be detached from thee. We rejoice that we are for evermore to be held fast to thee by love, and that our sympathy with thee is to grow stronger, and that when we have attained the measure of perfection which is required,

then thou wilt bring us into thine own immediate presence, to see thee no longer through a glass, darkly, but as thou art.

We rejoice, O Lord, in all these dispensations of thy providence by which we are trained to manliness, to patience, to fortitude, to suffering; by which we are trained to generosity, to magnanimity, to heroism. We thank thee for all that by which we are taught to be long-suffering, to be patient in darkness, and to wait for the light when it dawneth not, and, when we cannot see, to hold fast by trust, and live by faith, and not by sight. And may we feel that, though for the present it is not joyous but grievous, afterward it shall work out in us the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

We do not desire to mark out our own path, nor to determine the experiences which shall greet us upon it. We do not desire to measure thy way toward us. But we wish to see in thee a loving Father, and then to say, Thy will be done.

Prepare us, we beseech of thee, for life—for all its exigencies and duties. May we more and more, as the days go forward, and as the years extend themselves, and as our own time grows short, add diligence to every virtue. And may we rejoice, not that we are living, but that we are to attain; not that we are to be unclothed, but that we are to be clothed upon. Prepare us for that rest which remaineth for the people of God. Prepare us for that nobler life which awaits us beyond this. And though we see it dimly, and look for it sometimes, when clouds intervene so that we see it not at all, we believe, Lord: help our unbelief! We trust where we cannot see.

Now, we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wouldst deal with all who are in thy presence mercifully, as each one needs, and not as each one asks, except as he asks wisely. May we understand our condition, and ask for the things which we need; and may we be hindered from asking the things which we do not need and should not have. May our will evermore be in submission to thine. May we be obedient to thy will. Because our God is glorious in holiness, and full of love and goodness, may we rejoice in him, and exalt him in our thoughts, to be supreme and absolute Master over us. We surrender ourselves to thee. Bear us in the arms of grace and providence; and distil upon us the sweetness of knowing that thou dost love us better than we love ourselves. And whether there be life or death, whether there be light or darkness, whether it be the cross or the staff, whatever be the experience, grant that we may evermore feel that it is the will of God, and so our will. May we learn how to rejoice under all circumstances. May tears bring gladness. May our very sighs ripen into smiles. We pray that thou wilt grant that in all the remaining years of our lives we may take new heart and fresh courage, and labor with more earnestness as the days are shortening. And as the years are rapidly ending, may we do with our might what our hands find to do, knowing that the night cometh when no man can work.

Wilt thou enter every household. Help parents to lead their children, by example and precept, to a godly life. Raise up young men in our midst who shall stand in our places, and be better and more Christian in their daily life than we have been.

We pray that thou wilt comfort all those who are desponding, being under the yoke, and heavily laden. Draw near to all those who are in bereavement, whose thoughts are full of bitterness, and whose memories are clouded. Will the Lord sanctify their afflictions to them. Grant that they may behold how poor a place life is in which to invest the best things of the heart. May they be taught to lay up their treasure in heaven, that their thoughts may be there, where all things are sure, where no storms come, and where no violence disturbs our thoughts or plans.

O Lord, be near to any who are strangers in our midst; and according to their necessities minister to them. May this day be full of blessings to them.

Shake down from the tree of life, if not its fruit, yet its leaves, that all of us may have some taste of them, and receive strength therefrom.

Bless all churches of every name. Oh that they may be more diligent, more devoted, more unworldly in life! Grant that the spirit of contention and division may be taken away from them. Grant that there may be more unity of the spirit, and more of that bond of perfectness—love.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt spread abroad the light of truth everywhere. May that which hath made us so happy not be confined to us. May the tidings of Jesus Christ roll through all the earth. And grant, we pray thee, that the day may speedily come when men in every nation shall become preachers of the Word, and when the work of God shall go mightily forward, and flourish, and when all the earth shall be brought to a saving knowledge of the truth of God.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer us not according to our worthiness, but out of the abundance of thy mercies. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praise everlasting. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken, forgiving that imperfection, that inability to speak, which comes from the sinfulness and darkness of human experience. Draw up our helplessness into power. Draw up our thoughts into truth. Teach us how to draw up our fancies and imaginations, and sanctify them. Teach us how to kindle flames of light along the dark way of doubt and unbelief. O Lord God of our salvation, how we love our little children! And dost thou love us so? How we are willing to throw our arms around about them, to fight for them, yea, to suffer for them, yea, to sacrifice our lives for them, if it be needful! And dost thou feel so toward us? O Jesus, hanging upon Calvary, is this the love of God? How manifest, and yet how small is even that! What couldst thou bring that should represent the magnitude of the eternities? We believe, O Goodness! O Gentleness! O winning Love! O fashioning Power! O Father, *Father*, FATHER! we believe: help our unbelief! And to thy name shall be the praise now and evermore. *Amen.*

EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”—PHIL. II: 13.

This may be called a distinct declaration of the doctrine of an interior spiritual providence. Our Lord comforted his disciples with the assurance of an external divine providence. He assured them that their lives, their whole career, their safety, their defense, was a matter of divine oversight and care. He did not tell them how. He never philosophized. He merely stated this grand fact, addressing it, not to their reason as a thing to be understood, but to their heart, to their hope, to their courage, as a thing to be accepted and used for their comfort in life.

This providence was one which took charge of them even in their minutest physical wants. *Take no thought for your food nor for your raiment*, is the command—that is, *take no grinding anxiety*. To take thought, in old English, was to take *anxious* thought,—to be *troubled* about. And the declaration of the Master was this: “Give yourself no undue anxiety about what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or wherewithal you shall be clothed. God knows that you have need of these things.”

He calls attention to that work of divine providence by which the minutest things—little birds, the flowers of the field, and the grass—are all provided for. In God’s great arrangement, in the organism of nature, there was provision made for the things that are most delicate and helpless. Everything in the vast sphere of divine providence was cared for. “And are you not, he says, “better than birds and flowers? God will take care of you.”

Still he did not say how. He did not teach them botany. He did not instruct them in the physiology of vegetable growth. He said, “You will be taken care of;” but he did not teach the processes by which they should be taken care of.

Further than that, he told them that as reformers, as builders

of society on a better pattern, they would have troubles, and would be brought before the rulers of the synagogue, and would be put to death, many of them; "but let it not trouble you," he says; "be prepared, and I will take you through the emergency."

That was a providence which not merely touched the body, but went within. And later, he gave them a most unequivocal assurance that there was a providence which went through. "I will come and abide with you, and *in you*," he declared. Such was the impression which was made on the apostles that they brought this out in the most bold manner, and declared, as in our text, that God works in men to will and to do; He works in nature simply *to do*;—for nature does not will; but in man he works both *to will* and *to do*. He works in the germination and in the whole conduct of thought and feeling. He works in the relations of thought and feeling to practical life. And he teaches men that he has a providence on the inside which takes care of thinkings and plannings, as divine providence outside takes care of all acts and issues of physical life.

He assures them, then, that in the inward, the silent, the invisible world of the soul, there is a providence which is the equivalent of, and still more glorious than, that providence which takes cognizance of the visible, the tangible and the physical. It is to this last, which is so little regarded, and whose comfort is so little extracted, that we shall call your attention; and it is that part of the divine providence over men and the world which is transcendently the most important.

Consider, for instance, the prodigious fruitfulness of the individual life in any human being—at any rate, in any degree of civilization. Consider what lives we are living daily. Is there anything else so active as burning souls, carrying so many parts, and every part continually producing so many effects, visible or invisible? Consider how many trains of thought are set agoing by the senses from day to day. Consider how much of the action of the mind there is that is conscious and recognized, and how much there is that is unconscious and unrecognized, from the time that we rise in the morning to the time that we lie down and are lost in sleep at night. Who can measure the amount of thought that passes through an ordinarily active mind from first to last? If it were written in a book what voluminous lives we should be found to live, whose thoughts through one single twelve hours would fill a volume! It would not, perhaps, be a volume filled with the most useful matter; but the bulk would be there. The amount, if it were written out and reduced to physical conditions, of the inward

life of one single part of our nature—the thinking and observing part—is beyond computation; and it is not the less important because we have not been accustomed to measure it, estimate it, and conform it to any definite measurement.

Add to this, genius. Add the images which it is all the time forming. Add the effects which it produces on the reasoning and observing powers. Add all the judgments which men are incessantly forming. Add the reasoning processes which they go through, and the observations which they make to arrive at their conclusions.

Add to these the emotions which come up in the mind, of hope and despondency, of courage and despair, of like and dislike, of love and hate. Add the subtle interplay of the ten thousand feelings which are going on all the time. What a vast activity there is stored up in the invisible chamber of every man's life! This is the case even in tranquil moments; but consider how much increased this is by conflicts, by rivalries, by all those things which give rapidity and fruitfulness to the faculties of the mind. What a loom we carry in us! We stand by the side of a Jacquard loom, and wonder how wit could invent a machine that should act so like life. We wonder how any apparatus can be constructed to produce a fabric which shall come out with figures on it of birds, and men, and all manner of figures wrought apparently by the intelligent intent of the machine itself. But, strange as that may seem, it is not to be thought of in comparison with that loom which, without crank or shuttle, is perpetually producing fabrics with every sort of figure in the form of reason, and moral sentiments, and social affections, and passions and appetites. What a vast activity there is going on in the human mind so silently that there is no clanking heard! We go by men every day in each of whom are these fiery, flashing elements of power. Here are companies of them, here is an army of them, here is a city full of them, and there is the vastest activity in the mind of each; and who can conceive what is going on in the multitude of beating, throbbing lives which are flaming forth and reaching out to the uttermost in every direction, all as silent as the dew which is distilled on the myriad flowers in the meadow? Really vast, infinite, is this activity, when you think of it; and yet it goes on in perfect silence.

Consider, too, that large as is the outward achievement of human wit and wisdom, the inward history of it is far larger than the thing itself. In other words, the spiritual element, which works itself out into some physical exponent, is, in the sight of God, without a doubt, and is in our own sight when we think upon it, larger and more transcendent than that physical exponent.

When a man builds a curious house, men look it over, and speak of it as being economic ; as being well arranged ; as being finished beautifully in this respect or in that ; as being admirable in such and such points. We praise it. And we pay the architect in a better coin than the landlord pays him, when, with a heightened conception of him and his work, we say, "We will build, one of these days (for that is the day-dream which every man has, I suppose); and we will have a plan from him." There stands that little home cottage, which we so much admire, and which we mean with some modifications to reproduce ; but the house which the architect builds inside is a great deal more curious than the house that he builds outside. All the thoughts that he had ; all the processes that he devised ; all the plans that he concocted—these are more wondrous a thousand times than that which he finally produced. The invisible building is more than the visible building.

When the artist puts his pencil to the canvass, and brings out a picture which lives a thousand years, men can scarcely find terms in which to express admiration for that picture ; but the picture itself is not so wonderful as was that inside painter that first conceived of it ; and all the strokes which were put upon it, all the colors and tints which were given to it, are not to be compared with those myriad thoughts of which these are but feeble representations. All those visions out of which he selected ; all those thoughts which came down around about him ; which he arranged and re-arranged ; which he rejected and called back again ; which he finally chose among—these, he tells you, infinitely transcend anything that he has succeeded in producing. The painter is more than the painting, a thousand times over.

When a musician has written his tune, when he has written a monody, he has written but a slender stream of that great spring of genius which is welling up in his soul. He will tell you that that tune which sounded in his inward ear was never sung afterwards as it was first sung to him. The silent songs that genius hears, the invisible pictures that genius sees, the hidden buildings which men of genius construct, being castles in the air (literally castles in the air)—these are a thousand times more beautiful than those which get out into the visible world.

We see a household brought up well. A mother who took alone the burden of life when her husband laid it down, without much property, out of her penury, by her planning and industry, night and day, by her willfulness of love, by her fidelity, brings up her children ; and life has six men, all of whom are like pillars in the temple of God. And oh ! do not read to me of the campaigns

of Cæsar ; tell me nothing about Napoleon's wonderful exploits ; I tell you that, as God and the angels look down upon the silent history of that woman's administration, and upon those men-building-processes which went on in her heart and mind through a score of years, nothing exterior, no outward development of kingdoms, no empire-building, can compare with what she has done. Nothing can compare in beauty, and wonder, and admirableness, and divinity itself, to the silent work in obscure dwellings of faithful women bringing up their children to honor and virtue and piety. I tell you, the inside is larger than the outside. The loom is more than the fabric. The thinker is more than the thought. The builder is more than the building.

Consider, too, that this silent, invisible life within us is not only all the time working, and immensely fruitful, multitudinous in results, and greater than any or all of its exponents ; but that it is all the time, while it is working outwardly, working on itself. It is not so much a life that is working out results independent of itself, as it is a self-building process. All the thoughts that flow from us are working channels of thought in us.

As in the dark caves of Kentucky the lime that is held in solution forms, as the stream trickles from the roof, stalactites, or, as the water drops to the ground, stalagmites, so the process of thought leaves incrustations on the soul within, as well as outside of the soul. It is producing a result. It is perpetually building walls, if you liken it to architecture. It is working channels, if you liken it to a stream. It is adding stroke after stroke to the portrait, if you liken it to art. Nothing moves in this world that it does not exert an influence on the universe in some degree. The flight of a bird, the falling of a leaf to the earth, the scuffling of two birds, or their chasing each other through the air, the vibration of a note, anything which causes the least impact, changes the whole universe, as streams that run to the sea and empty themselves into it change the sea, and change the channel from the top to the bottom. The sea roars and murmurs, and then wipes its brow, and is calm again ; but it is never the same sea ; it is never the same shore ; it is never the same waves. The waves striking the shore, and retreating, never leave it as it was.

Now, if it is so in hard matter, if it is so in visible and physical things, how much more is it so in such mobile and subtle elements as those which constitute the soul's life ! How much more is it so with the soul which changes at a glance or a thought, which is more mobile than a thermometer, and which is more sensitive than any barometer ! And men are not conscious of it. Nor are they conscious of other changes which we know are going on.

I have lately kept an account of invisible things to a certain extent. I have made myself a companion of things not seen. For my barometer is all the time telling me of the changes of the mystic fluid in which I live. They are registered night and day, and I see what is going on where I cannot see. My barometer is likewise telling me of the increase or decrease of heat which is going on. And my differential thermometer is telling me, all the time, of the moisture that is in the atmosphere. So I know the hydrometric conditions of the world in which I live. And I have come to feel that the things which are going forward on the vastest scale I do not know anything about, or that they do not report themselves to the eye.

Professor Tyndall tells us that what we see of light is not all of light, and that rays which are operative, and which can be demonstrated to exist, have no means of reporting themselves to the eye. There is a vast amount going on which is palpable in this physical globe; but how much more there is that is subtle and impalpable! Light, heat, and electricity are a motive power and formative power which is playing through every single soul that lives, and thinks, and is acting, and is acted upon. The activity of that self which we carry is going forward every day, and changing, modifying, building, unbuilding, piling up, and pulling down the elements of our being. There is a perpetual formative process going on in the silent world about us; but the outward world is not so big as the inside world within us.

Men know about how they stand in some respects. Men know how they stand in regard to their bank account—sometimes. Men know how they stand in regard to their property—some men do. We have certain rough, coarse estimates which we make of ourselves. A man can usually tell about how tall he is; about how much he weighs; about how much he is worth—though he usually makes it twice as much as it really is. A man may be able to tell you that he stands reasonably well with his fellow men, that he is successful in business, and all that. But what coarse measures those are which take cognizance of such things! They do not touch a man's real manhood. What man can tell you to-day what is about the condition of his reason, of his observing power, of his power to philosophize? What man understands the workings of his reasoning intellect? What man has any gauge or mode of estimating, or can give any intelligent conception of, the actual moral state in which he is existing? What man can tell, not simply whether he has lied or sworn, but what is the condition of his moral sensibility? What man can tell what is its fiber, its

power, its growth, its richness or poverty, its admirableness or ignobleness? What man can give any true measurement of himself in these respects?

We are going on, and going up, and building; but we are like men who are building in the night, and do not see what they are building. Did you ever have a thought come to you in the night, and try to write it down without a light, and see in the morning what queer writing you had done? Queerer yet would be the writing which you would do if you were to attempt to write down what you are inside. And yet, the unknown, the unseen facts which are going on in the great invisible world are a thousand times more significant than those which are going on outside.

I look at what summer is doing and has done. What do I see when I go to my little hillside? I perceive that my evergreens are three feet higher than they were last summer, and are proportionally finer and better; but what do I know of all that the little roots have been doing? of the ramifications that they are making? of the supplies which they are gathering from the earth? of the various processes by which they are supporting the life of the shrubs? What do I know in regard to their condition as regards health or unhealth? What do I know of the bark? What do I know of the leaves?

We look at nature with a coarse eye, and see a few gross things; but the silent processes by which sap is furnished to the plant, and by which root, and fiber, and bark, and leaf, and blossom, and fruit are nourished and maintained, we are comparatively ignorant of. We look upon the various parts of a tree, but we look upon them in the most superficial manner, not suspecting that their interior nature is measurable and analyzable.

Who knows what the summer has done to the tree of life inside of us? Who knows where its roots have gone? Who knows what has been the secret history of the elements that have entered into the growth of this tree? Who knows what sap has gone through it and organized new growths in its branches? Who knows the methods by which its fruit is produced? Who can stand before man in imagination and picture the workings of his mind for any given period? We cannot write down the products of human life in a single year, and not even in a single month. How profoundly ignorant we are of ourselves; and yet it is in ourselves that we live, if anywhere. The man inside is the real man. The outside man is the mere shell or crust. That which goes to make manhood is not that which addresses itself to the outward senses: it is love, and truth, and fidelity, and aspiration,

and spirituality; and what do you know about these? What have you by which to trace and measure them? How can you estimate them? Yet you are sailing through the air, you are voyaging across the sea, you are carrying this great invisible realm of yourself upward and onward, to be reported by and by, when death shall come; and yet, how little do you know about it!

Notwithstanding all these sublime forces which exist in a man, how helpless he is to take care of himself! Not a babe of months, left to cook its own food, would be more helpless to supply his wants than the wisest man, left alone, is to fashion his own spiritual aliment, and take care of his inside life.

Thank God, science is now more and more, by analogies, pointing in the same direction, and teaching that all growths in this life are along a line which promises a higher spiritual development.

If, then, we know so little of men, and of things below, how much less do we know of the other life? How much less do we know of things which are indispensable to the shaping of that immortality in which we believe, or seek to believe?

Upon the basis of these representations, the doctrine of a providence exterior and interior is one which every man ought to believe, and which I think every man of a higher reason does believe. I most fully believe in the exterior providence of God, and I more fully and earnestly believe in his interior work. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," says the apostle, "for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do." I want the divine providence, the providence of clouds, and storms, and rains; I want the providence of summer and winter; I want the general providence of God, to make physical industry successful, and to guide me in all my ways. As a business man, as a merchant, as a lawyer, as a physician, I need to act in a sphere of external providence; but living there is comparatively easy. It is not to be compared with living in that other sphere, which is so vast, and which involves such momentous interests. That is where we especially need God's providence. And when God says, "I work in you to will and to do," the heart says: "Blessed be God, that there is a providence in the inside as well as on the outside."

Brethren, I know there are a great many who doubt whether there is a divine providence; yet, I know that if you take it as it is laid down in the New Testament, it is not only easily comprehensible, but employable, and that it is full of bounty and fruit. But if you attempt to frame and fashion the method of it, and cast yourself on science for a solution of it, you come to grief, and are

like a man who should cast himself on a hedge of thorns. Our Master never told us how he managed his providence. What did he say? He simply said: "Confide in me. I am the Guide; I am the Father; and I take care of all men. I take care of the beasts, of the grass of the field, and of the flowers; and certainly I take care of you. Therefore trust in me. Lean back your weary head, and believe that you are not the only one there is that concerns himself with your fate. Believe that there is God the Father, who looks after your welfare." "How, Lord?" "That is my business."

It is our philosophical curiosity or impertinence that runs forward and undertakes to say that God's providence works in this way, or that way, or the other way. It is the attempting to arrive at an explanation of the providence of God that brings us to grief in our reasonings.

"Why, does not God govern by natural law?" say men. "Do you suppose men can change natural laws? Do you suppose men's thoughts and wishes are going to change the organism which from eternity was laid down?" I say, I do not know anything about it. But then, I know that the God who makes natural laws, can use them to do what he wishes to have them do. I do not know how God ordains and administers his providence, but I know he has declared that he has a providence; and I know that I am a thousand times happier in believing it than I should be in disbelieving it. I am a thousand times more active when I am working under the influence of hope than when I am working under the influence of despair. When I put my trust in myself, or in any human power, I fall back discouraged and sick at heart; but when I say to myself, "Fool, why give yourself anxious thought? Does not God think enough for all his creatures? Do not distrust him," I am cheerful, and buoyant, and full of courage. I have seen skepticism on the subject of the providence of God, and I have seen anxiety about the future, in men. I have seen it in women. I have seen it in *this man*. And I have asked myself, after the manner of the sublime sarcasm of Christ: "Which of you, by taking thought, can add a cubit to his stature?" Suppose you are four feet high, and suppose you worry yourself almost to death about it, do you grow by worrying? Does it make any difference? Do fretting and anxiety do you any good? Do they not consume your happiness, use up your strength, and make you less fit for life and its enjoyments?

Do not you know some round, healthy-blooded woman who, while other people are crying, and all the time coming to grief, does not trouble herself, and comes out as well as they do, and has comfort all the time, too?

Do not you find men that are driven from pillar to post, that are racked with anxiety, that cannot sleep nights, and that do not know what they shall do to get along better? And are they not like a water-logged ship? And do they not use up their strength by mere fretting and worrying? And therefore is it not better to trust God and do what you can? Is it not better, after you have acted according to your highest wisdom, to leave the results to Providence? "But," says a man, "I shall be bankrupt." Very well, when you get to bankruptcy you cannot go any further: make up your mind to that and be at ease. "But suppose sickness comes?" Well, what can sickness do? It can kill you—that is all; and if you had just as lief die as live, that ends it. Your book-keeping is too operose. You do not keep your accounts on the right plan. Living or dying you are the Lord's.

I should like to have these men who doubt providence in external things (for I am now speaking to such) overhear their children in the nursery talking in this wise: Here are little Robert and little Mary. The elder is only ten years of age, and the other eight; and below them are brothers and sisters, six, five, four years of age, and so on all the way down. They are talking to themselves as to where 'pa and 'ma are going to, get their clothes and food. They cannot see. They do not understand pa's business. And they are fretting and worrying about where they are going to get what they need to eat and drink and wear. And the mother stands, and listens, and thinks, "Would not that make a capital story for a Sunday-school paper? The idea of those young children feeling anxious about how they are going to get along! Just as though we were not going to take care of them!"

And yet, does not that mother herself, when sickness comes, and little Robert is lying sick of one disease in one room, and little Mary is lying sick of another disease in another room, play the child, and a babe at that, and do just the same thing that she saw these children doing? And do not we do the same thing? And does not God laugh at us, and chide us? "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things," is the consolation which God breathes into our ears; and if you say, "How?" the reply is, "None of your business." If you find out before God tells you, you will do more than others have been able to do. But will you not believe until you do know how?

Suppose you are in danger of bankruptcy, and it is sharp 2:30, and the bank closes at 3:00, and you have got to pay five thousand dollars or fail, and you come to me, and I let you have the money; before taking it, will you ask me, "Where did you get it?" "I

got it, and got it for you, and that is all you want to know about it."

Some men seem more foolish than those Indians or heathen who scarify their bodies and torment themselves. It would seem as though men tried to make their troubles and sorrows that are ministerial worse than they are.

Now, if this is so in regard to the outside providence, which takes care of our physical comforts and material wants, how is it respecting that inside providence which takes care of our thoughts, and feelings, and imaginations, and lays the foundation of immortality in us, building up that something which is by and by to stand before God? We have no chart nor compass on the sea of inward life over which we are voyaging, except God. He is our Hope and Help in this great inner realm through which we are passing, not by the senses, but by faith. And if we live by faith and not by sight, how sweet and comforting it is to hear our Master say to us, "Work out your own salvation, and go forward with hope and courage, for it is God that is working in you to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Listen to those other words which are contained in the Epistle to the Colossians:

"Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth: for ye are dead; and your life is hid."

This great inward life is hid. Where is it hid?

"Your life is hid with Christ in God."

You are living, as it were, in the bosom of the Eternal.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

Lift your drooping head, O soul, much desponding, but easily conscious of little that is good and much that is evil! O soul, much tempted, much tried, sorrowful, waiting, sometimes compelled to patience! lift up your head. Your life is more than appears. What is going on in your life you have no registry of, but God has kept an account of it all. He has been molding you by a million touches; by thoughts and feelings he has been building a structure within you; and when he takes away the scaffold, as he will ere long, then you will appear glorious to him, to angels, to men, and to yourself. And then you will be satisfied, first, with yourself, when you see that you are wrought in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commit yourselves to the providence of God in outward things: commit yourselves to the dear providence of God in inward things; and believe that neither your father, nor your mother, nor the wife of your bosom, nor your own self even, loves you half so much as

the God who made you, the God who keeps you, and the God who manifested his love for you by the gift of his Son Jesus Christ, our Saviour, who is God in you the hope of glory.

Let us draw near to God, dear Christian brethren, this morning, with renewed confidence and trust. Let us, as we partake of these emblems of the broken body of Christ, and of his blood shed for the remission of our sins, renew our hope, and become, even in these dark days, children of light. Let the promises of God be like so many chaplets round about our head. Let us stand strong, not in our own wisdom, and not in our own goodness, but in this: He loves us; and having loved us, he will love us unto the end.

I now affectionately invite all who need divine help, all who are conscious of their own sinfulness, all who are earnestly and honestly desiring to live a Christian life, and all who are willing to take the bounty which God proffers to them—I now affectionately invite all such to partake with us of these emblems, which are not alone for church folks, nor for eminently Christian people. I present to you your dear Jesus, who, when he walked upon the earth, was a Friend of publicans and sinners. And if there be here any who, being sinful, long for regeneration, for uplifting and for nobility in God, he is your Jesus, your Saviour; and you have a right to these humble memorials, if you accept them sincerely as a help to a better and a higher life. Whether you belong to one church or another, or to no church, if you covenant to give yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to live, as far as in you lies, by the help of God, a high and holy life, I invite you to tarry with us. I invite sinners to partake of the bounty and blessing of their promised Saviour.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

OUR heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou art, though thou art so much above our reach, and that thou art everywhere. To our homes we come by weary journeyings; but it is home for the soul anywhere throughout the vast domain of God. Where there is want or sorrow or need, thou art close at hand. Though thou dost not now manifest thyself to these our bodily eyes; though men may no longer reach out their hand to thee, yet thou knowest how to make known thy presence and power to our inward life, and our souls greet thee, and take hold upon thee. We rejoice when we have spiritual fruition of our God, that this higher communion is granted to us, and that we are not left to the earth to be earthly by a mere physical communion. We rejoice that we are drawn to a higher life; that we are drawn into the better part of ourselves; that we are growing; and that by faith we come to that manhood which is appointed to those who follow thee.

We rejoice, O Lord, that thy testimonies are sure, and that the witnesses which have now swelled through the ages of the faith of God toward his people are not vain witnesses. We ourselves also testify to thy divine goodness. Ever since we can remember, thy mercies have been round about us. Thou hast done exceeding abundantly more for us than we could ask or think. Thou hast shed the light of thy countenance upon us; and it has been daylight indeed to our souls. Thou hast been with us in the storm and in the calm; in sickness and in health; in perplexity and in times when all things were clear and tranquil. Thou hast been a God for the soul. Thou hast met its wants and exigencies. Thou hast blessed us in the innermost recesses of our life. Thou hast made it profitable for us to call upon thee in prayer. Thou hast granted unto us that communion which has cast its light out in all the times of strife and struggle in the world. We rejoice to believe that thou wilt not leave us nor forsake us; and that having loved thine own, thou wilt love them unto the end.

We thank thee that more and more are finding their way to the unknown God. We thank thee that more and more are coming through their nobler part to that kingdom which is the realm of the spirit, and not of the body. Especially may thy blessing rest upon thy servants who have been gathered to-day into this visible church, and who are joined to the company of those who live by faith. Be with them in all their relations of life. Grant that they may live more and more godly, with their eye upon the world that is to come; that their hopes may be more and more radiant; that their hearts may be stirred within them, both to obey thee in the silence of their thoughts, and to work out before thee with their hands the things which are becoming. We pray that thou wilt comfort them in their household relations. Sanctify their afflictions. Bless to them their prosperity. Take from it all its dangers. May they find every single day that their strength is in God. May they walk more happily than ever before. May they be more cheerful, more hopeful, more courageous. May they bear such a testimony by their life that men shall be led to draw near to their Saviour, and find the same bounty and blessing which they enjoy.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon the families of this church. We thank thee for all thy great goodness to it in times gone by; for the unity of feeling which exists in it; for the absence which there has been of division, and hardness, and coldness, one toward another. Thou hast unit-

* Immediately following the reception of members into the church

ed this church in thee, and so in itself. And we pray that still thou wilt go on in ways of mercy with it.

May thy truth evermore be clear. May it search the innermost thoughts of men. May it lead to nobler lives, and to higher conceptions of character, and to more blessed fruitfulness.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon parents who are attempting to rear their children unto manhood. May they never be weary in well-doing. May they not be discouraged nor give up so long as life shall last.

We pray that thou wilt bless the labors of thy servants who are devoting themselves to the welfare of those who are less favored than themselves. May those who carry light into dark places, those who go to houses of distress bearing comfort, those who carry instruction among the ignorant, and those who endeavor to help such as need help around them—may they be themselves guided and sanctified and abundantly blessed of God.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt put it into the hearts of more not to live for self, not to live for things transient, but to live in the spirit of Him who went about doing good, and who said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. More and more may this spirit be diffused throughout the land.

May churches no longer be divided one over against another. May they learn those things which make for peace and union. May love prevail. May the power of the malign passions be more and more banished from the earth, until at last the beast shall be uprooted, and the man shall emerge and come forth in all the purity and beauty that is in Christ Jesus.

Now, may the services of this sanctuary be acceptable in thy sight. We would please thee. Thy pleasure is our joy.

We pray that thou wilt grant to every one who is present with us a portion of thy blessing. Remember those who are strangers in our midst. Grant that the blessing of God may rest upon them, and that they may find fellowship in thy sanctuary with thee and with us. Remember those dear ones who are far away in their households. Follow their desires and prayers this morning.

Spread the word of truth throughout all the world. May the number of those who labor to carry the Gospel to their fellow men be increased. May those who bear the name of Christ be precious everywhere. May nations no longer bruise and wound each other. May they no longer throw themselves with desolations one upon another. May the time of peace and gladness come when Christ shall reign over all the earth.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

THE USE OF IDEALS.

“And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”—1 Cor. 1: 28—31.

The apostle believed a good deal more than he taught. He saw a great many things which were true, but which it was not possible for him to impart, because men were not ready to receive them. No one can read the close of the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians without receiving Paul's idea of the great truth of the relative and of the absolute far beyond any expression which he ever gave to it *in extenso*; and there shines up through the passage which I have read a philosophy of the apostle which we may develop, but which would not have fitted the times or circumstances in which he lived. It lay in his own mind an under-truth, out of which came direction and instruction which was adapted to the wants of the disciples of his time. What did he mean when he spoke of “things that are” as being subdued by “things which are not”? Did he mean to say that nothing is stronger than something? Did he mean to affirm that a nonentity has an actual power over a reality? No; he meant simply that as compared with physical realities, as compared with sensuous life and organization, there is a power in the thought-realm, invisible, intangible, unorganized, which is stronger than any development in the form of matter. Kingdoms are not so strong as are the impulses and the invisible tendencies of men which go to make kingdoms.

But in this connection it was not the invisible in general that he was speaking of: it was that which we call in our time *the ideal*. He was describing the conflict of the truth of the Gospel with the great realities of philosophy and of worship which existed in the world. The better thought of God, and the better thought of manhood, and the better thought of character and of life, which is the ideal thought—this was in conflict with the tangible and the

visible. The unseen, as men regarded it at that time, was simply an imagination—a thing without an existence. At the best it was but poetry, they said. It was mostly fantasy, moonshine, mere supposition. There was no reality in it. But Paul said:

“Things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not [ideal things], to bring to nought things that are” [real things].

In other words, he declared that things which are not in any philosophy, and which are not in any outward form of organization, are mightier than the things which are recognized by philosophy, and which are organized in some outward form.

“That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. That, according as it is written, He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.”

The appositeness of this passage—the connecting us with Christ Jesus in this remarkable way—I shall call your attention to in the closing of this discourse, only saying now, in respect to this, that the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness which the theologians of former times attempted to teach has been rejected by sound thinkers, and is scarcely taught at all. But they were feeling after an illustrious truth. Their mistake consisted, not in the fact that there was no truth in that direction, but that they took an imperfect view of it, and did not give an expression which was worthy of the thing that was sought by them. But that will come up in the sequel.

I propose to speak of *The Use and Abuse of Ideals*.

There is a power in the human mind, which all recognize, to see things as they are—that is to say, as they embody themselves to our senses; but there is equally a power to see things as they might be. There is a constructive power as well as an interpretative power. And it is not the result of education, although education develops it. It antecedes development. It is found in children even more than in men grown. It is found in the most savage nations just as much as in the most civilized. There is in the human mind a power to receive the truths which are exterior to the mind, and which embody themselves and come in through the ear-gate and the eye-gate to the senses. There is also a power in the human mind, as clear and distinct, to see things that are not—that is, things which the senses would say do not exist. It is the power to see things in their imagined condition. A child that sees an apple as large as it can hold in its hand, has no trouble in seeing an apple as large as it can hold in both hands, or twenty times as large and as beautiful. He has the power to create it. And it may be more powerful in its influence upon the child's mind than the thing that is.

Among the ignorant, in all nations, this power of fashioning pictures, visions, ideals, has existed; and it is where it has depended upon ignorance that it has led to fantastic visions, and even to impossible things. But, however imperfectly it has worked among the nations in times gone by, this power of fashioning an imaginary thing, and then having that imaginary thing come back and act upon the soul that fashioned it, has been working out one of the most energizing and divine elements that is in the human composition. For although there is great use and great glory in the management of things that are, and are apparent to the senses, yet there is even infinitely more glory in the fashioning of things that the hand cannot handle, nor the eye see, nor the ear hear, nor the tongue taste. Rightly used, the power of raising up an ideal—that is to say, anything more perfect in the imagination than its prototype—before the senses; the power to put a better thing in the place of the thing that is before you, or that you have, is a power which lies at the root of all growth in the individual, and of civilization in the community.

A man dwells first in a cave; and by and by there comes to him the thought, “If instead of living in a cave, or worse, in a hollowed-out tree, I were to put up four posts, and cover them in, would not that be better?” The thought of a hut to a man who has been brought up in a cave or a hollow tree is a thought of genius. It is an ideal.

But when children brought up in huts begin to say, “Why should we forever live in this one room, where all things go on together? Why should we not have two rooms, and put the dirt in one and the clean in the other? Why should we not have a house?” they also give expression to an ideal. He who from a hut goes to a house, has an ideal in his mind before he does it. Nobody ever stumbled upon a thing like that.

And when men had lived in houses, the thoughts of multiplied apartments, and of more convenient ones, and of passages, and of decorations, and of ten thousand machineries of use, dawned one by one upon their minds; and they were ideals before they were reals. They never would have been reals if they had not first been ideals. It is the things that you think of that lead to the things that you do.

A man, himself a savage, found a crab-apple tree in the woods, and ate of the crab-apples, and scarcely thought he would eat again, till hunger drove him to it; and yet, he thought, “May be there are better, or these may be made better.” Ah! *may be made better*—that is genius to him. The apple that he thinks of is the ideal

apple. This acerb crab-apple, puckery, unsatisfying, is the real apple. Looking at it, he says, "Out of this may come something better"; and he plants the seed in a fairer soil, under better circumstances, and the products do prove better. And some other man says, "If they are made better by transplanting once, why may they not be twice?" And so, step by step, is developed the orchard.

It was by these processes, long delayed, and continued through ages, through a thousand years, that the ideal led on, step by step, to a higher ground.

Men saw that the acorn, which the squirrel, or some other animal, scratched leaves or soil over, sprouted and grew; and they said, "Why would they not grow if I should cover them with earth?" So they began to open the soil, and put in the seed. At first they opened the soil with a sharp stick, pulling it themselves, and scratching a furrow. And then they said, "Why should I pull the stick? Why should not the animals do it?" And they made the animals do it—and did not take out a patent-right for it either! And then the thought occurred to them, "Why not have something better than a stick? Why not shoe the stick with iron?" And by and by came the plow. But *the real* was the sharp-pointed stick; and *the ideal* led on, from step to step, till we have the plow; and not only a plow pulled by animals, but a steam-plow, which is the final form of a rude stick propelled by hand.

So we go from the real to something better. There is something in us that says, "This is not as good as it may be. There may come out of it something better." And where a man, in looking on a thing which exists, has power to conceive of a better form or quality or use for that thing, or a larger sphere in which it may be employed, he has an ideal of that thing.

An ideal, then, is the conception of higher forms, or qualities, in things, in conduct, in character. Every man who is at all civilized has ten thousand ideals. Every man who is a man with any vitality, if he has been civilized and Christianized, has come into that condition in which his whole head sparkles and swarms with conceptions of things. He is not content with things as they are, but is incessantly suggesting to himself how they might be. And the *might be* is the ideal. How good or how poor this is depends upon the nature of the man that thinks it. To some it is meager. To others, it is better. To yet others it is very fine. To still others it is transcendent. These last are geniuses—the highest forms of men.

There can be no doubt, then, that this is a part of the nature of the mind which God gave to it, and which is necessary to it in

the conditions in which it exists, and through which it is to be developed; namely, not to be content with things as they are—neither with nature outside, nor with manhood inside; but to have the power of conceiving betterment, and then to have the power of following that conception. And men in life—comprehensively speaking, society—are rich, not in proportion to what they have realized, but in proportion to their power of idealizing.

Sometimes we use the term *ideal*, referring to things as they are, and looking at them in an abstract light; but I am using it in the sense of holding up a rare pattern or conception by which we may strive for improvement. And it is the use and abuse of this faculty that I wish to speak to you about this morning.

First, this capacity of having ideals; of seeing things which are not; of perceiving what the things which are may become—this capacity inspires life. It is this which is perpetually waking up in men a desire to better themselves, and to better their circumstances.

Man is an unfolding animal. Whatever may be the whole truth in respect to modern philosophy, there can be no more question that man is a seed, and that in his generation he unfolds, than that man exists at all. That the race has been through a series of unfoldings is a thing established, I think, beyond any peradventure. Now, it is necessary that such a creature, with such a peculiar organization, by which he is to rise through unfoldings step by step to a higher development, should have something to stimulate him to this higher development. Content, in one sense, is animalism. Ideals make blessed discontent: not murmuring, not repining, but aspiration—a sense of the unfitness of things. And a love for that which is better is divine in a man.

The horse knows nothing about that, and the dog knows nothing about it, so far as we know. The dogs and horses never told me their secrets; but there is no evidence that any animal, except the rational animal, man, has any sense of the value of the superior over the inferior; of the ideal over the real; of things as they might be over things as they are. This quality belongs distinctively to man. It is that very quality which sets him on the way of development and improvement.

That which makes a man all the while fruitful of suggestion; that in a man which leads him to say: "What is a matter of fact to-day may be better to-morrow; and what is a matter of fact to-morrow may be better the next day": that which keeps alive in a man the sense of bettering and bettering, unfolding and unfolding, is divine. Ideas are the forces by which God brings

society up. Pains and penalties, in one sense, force men away from gross animalism. Their attempts to live a large life in the lower sphere are all the time met and thwarted. God does not mean that men should live as animals do. When they attempt to live so he brings upon them perpetual stripes. It is as if God were saying to men in their universal experience: "Not down there, not down there; up, out! up, out!" to drive them from a lower sphere to the higher life.

There are these glowing suggestions, these golden thoughts, these star-light ideals, that hang in the air above men, and are winning them upward. These two things—the pressure from below, and the drawing from above—both together are continually leading men to unfold, to develop, to grow, and rise to the nobler and higher spheres of manhood.

A man may be contented with his fare. He may be contented if he has brown bread, hard brown bread, Prussian brown bread, and none other. If a man is in prison, he may say: "I will be content with that; I am too much of a man to grumble because my food is not milled in that way or in this." But a people, as a people, ought to have higher food. A nation of men ought not to sit down and say, "Poor, hard, innutritious, soggy bread is good enough for us." For a race to do that is to make swine of themselves. For special reasons an individual man may rise above his circumstances. For a man who is a martyr, and who has been accustomed to higher things, and who is disdainful of lower things, it is noble to have this content, and to scorn repining; but for a man regarded as a member of a great growing race or species to have such contentment is beggarly. It is beastly. It is being willing to stay in the egg when he ought to want to be hatched. It is being willing to remain in the nest when he ought to want to fly with the eagle. It is being willing to be an animal when he ought to feel the pulsations of manhood far above the animal. Many seem to think that to be content is a Christian virtue. Under some circumstances it is; but under other circumstances it is base.

There lived on the Miami Bottom the richest man in all the county. He owned more hogs than any three farmers in that region; and he had more acres of corn to feed his swine on than any of his neighbors. He had a double log-cabin with a second story to it. He lived up-stairs, and the other hogs lived down stairs. The floor was so loose and clattery that when the horses and hogs got to kicking and squealing below, he could shove a board one side and halloo at them to keep order. His knife was a

corn-cob with an old razor in it. There was not a man in the county who had as much money, and as much ground, and as many swine as he had. I will not mention his name, for he may have some relations alive!

Now tell me, my friends, is the coarse, corn-eating, pig-swilling man who is master of a thousand hogs, himself the chief, and who is content with his condition, and does not want anything better, an example of Christian contentment? Is such contentment as his manly?

When the Prodigal Son champ'd his pod by the side of the swine, should he have said, "This is good enough for me; I will stay here and eat with these swine?" When he said, "I will arise," was it not the manhood that spoke in him? Everywhere it is the divine in man that says, "Arise; look higher; think more nobly; endeavor better!" To be content under certain circumstances is degrading; it is devilish. But aspiration, the having an ideal and reaching toward it—that is divine. That belongs to the higher manhood.

Ideals, then, rightly used, inspire life, and the truest life, in men.

Ideals also redeem men from a life which is purely sensuous, from a life that is unspiritual, and opens up to him a future and invisible life. And this is true in regard to every part of life that we touch. Faith means the sense of things not seen. And the sphere of faith is a most important sphere. It relates to character, and it relates also to the future. There is no man that works and carries his work in his head, who has not the lower form of faith. The man is thinking of things unseen who lies awake at night and thinks of a new invention or of the development of some machine. And it is a noble thing for a man to work in physics in such a way that the chamber where he works is invisible, though the work itself, when it comes out, is to be visible. It is opening up a higher realm when the workman is discontented with the thing he does, and the manner of executing that thing.

It is said that a Yankee is restless, and is never contented until he has changed anything that he has received. Although this may be carried to excess; although change is not always improvement and advancement; yet the attempt to see if something cannot be made better at every step in our daily work is noble, and is pointing toward the spiritual and invisible.

Still more is it so when it is applied to conduct. It is noble for a man to endeavor to do the best things that are done. The young man has any number of practical examples before

him, and he can select those who shall be his models. He can select the highest and noblest models of conduct, or he can select those which are coarse and unmannerly, patterning after those who rely on their muscle, and "strike out from the shoulder." A man can follow those who are brutal and rude, or those who are refined and aspiring. But when a man has made his selection, and undertaken to follow his model, a higher ideal may be suggested to him. He may have awakened in him a desire to develop his true manhood. The ambition may be set at work in his thoughts to do better than the average of those with whom he associates. And a man's conduct should be nobler than that of ordinary men. One who is content to act just as everybody else acts, and no better, is dead, to all intents and purposes. It is only the man who aspires, and seeks to make his conduct better, and truer, and purer, and nobler, and larger, that is really alive.

If this be true in respect to conduct, still more is it true in respect to character, or the interior conduct of a man—the conduct of thought and feeling, and the permanence which comes to it. No man should be content with his thinking power, nor any part of it. No man has ever yet learned to be so skillful that he can afford to say, "I do not want to be any more skillful." No man can train his power of observation so that he can afford to say, "I do not desire to have any better power of observation." No man can be so high in reasoning or generalizing that he can afford to say, "I do not want to reason or generalize any better." No man can use any of his disciplined parts so as to be able to say, "For all my purposes I have reached the maximum." No man whose disposition is naturally generous, and who has been educated by his parents to high-mindedness, can afford to say, in respect to any part of his inward character, "I am good enough. I am better than men require me to be." True nobility never should be satisfied with anything in any direction so long as there is anything better. It is to go on from grace to grace, from fineness to fineness, from good to better, from lower to higher. As long as life lasts growth is to go on.

That is a good tree of which I say, every spring when I go up to the country, "Ah! It is broader than it was last summer. I noticed, a year ago, that I could see light between that and yonder evergreen: but there is no space there now. And I see that it has sprouts shooting three feet into the air this summer." I pronounce this to be a wholesome tree. But not far from it there is another tree. When I look upon that I see it has not grown. Leaves cover it; but there are no new shoots on the top, on the side, or anywhere.

And I say, "There is something at the root; or something is the matter with the bark; or the circulating system is out of order." A tree that does not grow is not a sound or wholesome tree. And when I find the next summer that half of it is dead, I do not change my mind. And if I find the next summer that it is two-thirds dead, I do not change my mind then. And when at last the old tree stands and waves one branch, like a sunk swimmer with one hand above the water, saying, "So much of me is alive yet, but all the rest is dead," I say to the axman, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

When I see men who are all the time growing taller and broader in their character; and who by the development of their mind are fulfilling the divine intent, I say that they are useful members of society; but when I see men stand still, growing neither taller nor broader, I say, "Something ails them." When I see men whose outward form remains, but in whom no sap is left, from whom part after part has been taken away, in whom there is no vitality, who are shrunk and shrunk, so that there are only one or two faculties which are not extinguished, I say, "It is time that they were taken away. They are useless."

It is life; it is pressing forward; it is the influence of ideals which lift you up, and never will let you have any peace where you are—it is these things which go to make a true and essential manhood.

Therefore, ideals prevent stagnation; as where they lead men to aspire who, if it were not for them, would be content with things as they are in society. And this leads to that everlasting question—in our land at any rate—of the *conservative* and the *progressive*. Who shall decide between them? One man says, "I am conservative." Another man says, "I am progressive." I say that if you are a wise man, you are both conservative and progressive. If a man is wise, his back is conservative, and his front progressive; and to cut him in two is to kill him! If a man is all progressive, he is not sound and right; and if a man is all conservative, he is not sound and right. I never saw a man that I cared anything about who had not both the conservative and the progressive elements. If a man is to be of much use he must have them both.

Some men, you know, when the team is at the top of the hill, say, "Now, be free! Do not use the breeching. Use the traces. Loosen the reins. Go as fast as you can." I say that that is unwise progression.

Other men, you know, are just the reverse. They will not let you use the traces at the bottom of the hill, but they will stop the

team, and buckle the breeching as tight as they can, and block the wheels, for fear the horses will run up hill too fast!

Now, both of these elements are indispensable to society and to the individual. Every man should be progressive, and every man should be conservative. Every man should shake, and every man should gather. Every man should sow, and every man should reap. Every man should take seed, and throw it away; and when it comes back he should put it in the garner, that he may have seed to plant again. One of these elements is the gleaning power, and the other is the keeping power. One cuts, and the other binds the sheaf. They ought to be friends, and not enemies.

When men made the tread-wheel they imitated God's globe; for when people are on tread-wheels, however much they may like to sit down, they do not do it. They are not allowed to. They travel on; or, as the wheel turns, stand still and walk. The globe turns over every day, and says to men, "Keep step!" It gives them no time to rest. While they are in the world they must work. Their business is to develop from a lower sphere into a higher. So long as men live in this world, life means activity—activity in thought, activity in plan, activity in desire. It means effort. It means out-reaching aspiration.

No man should think that he is good enough. No man should think that his household is good enough. No man should think that his house is good enough. I do not believe in a peasant who is content with his dwelling. I do not believe in a man who is so well satisfied with his house that he does not want the chimney, the walls, the floors, the windows, the appointments, something or other, better. I do not believe in a man who cannot think of some sort of improvement, though he may not be able to make it with his own hand. It is not necessary that you should run to extravagance; but you are not to look upon your household arrangements as being sufficient. You ought to regard them as things to be refined, to be improved, to be made better.

There are elements in every-day life which vex it, torment it, hamper it, anger it; and these should be watched for and overcome. Every man should study to have better thoughts, and to have a better speech. Men should study to elevate the tone of their intercourse with those among whom they move. There is not a man who always speaks across his table as he ought to. There is not a woman who always replies as she ought to. We know what the music of life is; but what jangling there is in the air, like the sound of discordant bells from different steeples! How that which God meant to be wonderful in its balm and bless-

ing is made to produce pain and sorrow! For you and me there is a better way of intercourse; there is a better way of business; there is a better way in the store; there is a better way in the shop; there is a better way on the farm; there is a better way on the sea; there is a better way in the street; and it becomes us to hunt for better ways in those spheres where we are providentially placed. It is by trying little by little to discover and put in practice better ways that we are to elevate our lives. Nothing else will do it.

This is the foundation of all heroism; for only by dwelling upon things better than the level of life can a man prepare himself to be a hero. Brethren, there are not many heroes in the world; but there is a vast amount of heroism. Whoever does a thing that is above the ordinary line of doing, so far rises toward heroism; and if it is a thing which can not be done without self-sacrifice, it is heroic. There is many a woman who is heroic because she can hold her tongue. Ah! do not laugh. You tie a man to the stake, and let Indians dance about him, and stick slivers into him, and with torches light them, and if he bears his suffering patiently, do not you see that he is heroic? And let a woman stand where every inch of her nature, which is exquisitely sensitive, is subjected to the extremest torture, and let her in spite of it all manifest a disposition which is inexpressibly lovely, and stand patiently, and "having done all, stand,"—is not she heroic? There is many and many a hero by reason of the virtue of silence. And I tell you that God's histories will reveal more names than men's do of heroism. There is scarcely a neighborhood in which there are not heroic things done. Every day and every hour there are heroic things done in our kitchens. I ask the men who are acquainted with the lives of hard-working servant girls, "Do they spend their money for themselves or for others?" And the report on every hand is that they toil night and day, year after year, to earn enough to enable them to send money to their kindred. And do you tell me that there is no heroism in the kitchen? You think heroism must be on Mount Athos. It is on the plain below!

Wherever a heart beats for others, and goes out to succor others, and acts disinterestedly, at its own cost and sacrifice, for something else or somebody else, there is heroism. Alas! that we cannot join heroism to heroism; but it is expensive food. Men cannot afford to be heroic except in spots. Yet, if a man is never heroic, why is he on earth? Why is he not dead? He is dead; why is he not buried? Men break out here and there with patience in places where it requires a vast amount of grace to be

patient. Men perform deeds, run risks, go through perils, for the sake of doing good. And such men manifest a spirit of heroism. But I am sorry to say that a sort of average conventional goodness seems to deaden heroism. I tell you, I love my kind so much that I am always glad to know that even bad men have something good in them. I hardly dare repeat to you a fact that came to my knowledge; but I will.

The San Francisco was carrying a cargo of women of the street, and she was overtaken by a storm, and it was evident that but few of those on board could be saved; and one who was there told me that not one on that ship in their distress was more calm and disinterested and helpful of others than these low creatures. And from the bottom of my soul I thanked God. Do you want to see every spark of virtue trod out of those that are degraded? Are you not glad when you find that there is a glimmer of it left in them? I was.

There are many bad men here and there in whom you will see heroisms. And wherever you see an act of disinterestedness above the level of ordinary endeavor and conduct, be sure that an ideal of heroism has been there. For heroism is born of forethought. You cannot sow cockle-seed and thistle-seed and find an oak tree growing from them. Wherever you see an oak tree growing, you may rest assured that an acorn has been there. Heroism does not spring out of that which is all vulgar; and yet heroism comes from those in whom there is much vulgarity. There are many persons who are living not far from the fiery gate of hell, but who have thoughts that are heroic. And oh, that they had the power of resurrection in them by which they might lift themselves up out of the slough and make these occasional thoughts frequent, and these frequent thoughts habitual, and so save themselves!

Ideals also prevent conceit. How men become vain when their standard is low! How natural it is for men, having a low standard, and never raising it, to think, not only that they have come up to it, but that they really have overgrown it! I have seen the *Glycene Chinensis* grow eighty feet high; and everything ought to grow to the extent of the capacity which it has in it; but I have seen it come far short of that. I had one myself. Although it was planted in the best of soil it would not grow a bit the first year. The second year it grew about an inch. The third year it grew about a foot. In the course of five or six years it got up some six feet high—about on a level with the balustrade of my veranda. I have no doubt that that *Glycene* felt proud and conceited, and looked down, and said, "Well I am up above this balcony, ain't I?"

Why, I have done splendidly well." If you will only make your ideal mean enough, you can every one of you feel that you are heroic. I pulled up the old thing, and threw it away. And it did it good; for when Mr. Turner found it, and carried it to another place and planted it, it took the hint, and commenced to grow, and became quite large!

What men want is, something to give them a better ideal of growing. No man who looks down for his measure will rise. It is a shame for a man to excuse himself for the undeveloped condition which he is in by saying, "The law lets me do so and so." Whom was the law made for? For those who could not go higher than the average strength of the whole community. And are you not stronger than the average of the community? No man lives who should not be honestier than the law requires him to be. There is no man that should not be more generous than he is required to be by public sentiment. There is no man who ought not to be a better man than his circumstances require. Every man should be more highly developed in manhood and truth and wisdom than the majority of men in society. You should set your standard high, and then strive to reach it.

A man who looks up all the time is never a great man to himself. Are you a poet? Then do not get poetasters to read, and say, "I write better poems than they do, and therefore I am a better poet." Read Milton; read Shakespeare; read Homer; go to the old Englishmen of immortal thought, whose drums and trumpets have sounded clear down through the ages to this day; go to the grandest and noblest of our thinkers and writers; sit in council with them; and then see if you are not a dwarf—a pigmy. It will make you humble to have high ideals. But a man who forever measures himself by pigmies and dwarfs, and thinks he is better than they—what is he but a mountebank among pigmies and dwarfs? A true ideal tends to cure the conceit of men, and to rank them. Says the apostle, "Let every man think of himself as he ought to think, soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." The measure of faith? What is faith? It is the sight of invisible excellence. It is the sight of noble qualities unseen. It is the sight of ideal grandeur. Let every man measure himself by that conception, and then think of himself as he ought to think; let him think of himself as lowly and poor and needy; and he may well call out for help and for grace.

I have preached too long; for I have preached an hour; and I have not got half through; so I will add one more head to this side of the subject, and take hold, at some future time, of the other, and speak of *The Abuses of the Ideal* in a separate discourse.

The ideal is peculiarly Christian; because Christ came to give us a new life; he came to give renovation to character. Christianity is simply the theory and the philosophy which teaches how to deal with that character which is superinduced upon the animal conditions of man. It may be that man sprang from the animal. I have no objections to that. It may be that he came to his higher nature by development. However that may be, this higher nature which has been developed on and above the animal nature is the part of man which Christianity comes to instruct you how to develop still higher—how to make salvable and immortal. And every man must of necessity, if he is going to be a Christian, have an ideal character. God must be an ideal to him—that is, something conceived, rather than something seen. And heaven must be an ideal to him—that is, something that is before him in his thought, and not before him by his senses. And so, all that throng of angelic influences—the communion of the Saints with the world; the conditions of the upper sphere; that ministration of angels which has been recognized in the old dispensation and in the new, but which has almost died out of men's faith—all these come through the medium of the ideal.

When, therefore, the Apostle says that God has chosen the things that are not to bring to nought the things that are, in the light of this discussion does it not become a very plain thing? Does not the declaration, that God brings to nought the things that are, become very plain when he treads down vulgarity by the ideal of a higher manhood; when he treads down vice and violence, and puts under all things that are, and makes them subject to the higher and nobler nature? When this element of faith; when this conception of an ampler life, and of a nobler self; when these invisible, intangible things—things that are not—when all these things shall take the place of things external, and fill the whole world with their light and glory, and men shall develop and aspire, do not you see that a new meaning will be given to the Gospel, and that *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the base things of the world, and things which are despised, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are?*

Brethren, take home this subject to yourselves. There is a plentiful application which you can, every one of you, by your thoughts, minister to your own cases. Have you an ideal in every part of your life? Do you hold the light of better things over every one of your passions and appetites, over every institution and relation,

over all social economies, over all business, over all civic and political relations? Do you live by the bright picture of something better than that which you have attained? Do you chasten the vulgarity of daily life? Do you refine the cares and necessities of daily life? Are you growing larger, sweeter, finer, and better? If so, then you are children of God, and heaven is already begun in you.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

How fair is the world which thou hast made, O Lord our God! How wonderful art thou in thy glory, and in all thy thoughts of beauty, and in all the excellence which the earth doth show forth! And yet, where hast thou made anything so beautiful or so full of sweetness as little children are? They are of thee, and they bear something of thy nature, and shall go back to thee to report what history hath befallen them upon earth. They are thine, and are lent to us. And what joy do they bring! Though they come crying, how do they come to bear smiles and laughter, and full-handed joy, in years and years that flow on? How light is the house with them! and how dark it is without them! How full of strength dost thou make their little weakness to those who are called to take care of them! How in nourishing them do we nourish ourselves! How in teaching them do we ourselves learn! How are we taught what God is by that which he makes us to be by those little ones that are so dear to us!

When we look back and think of our childhood, of our pleasure in our father's house, of all the golden hours and rich experiences which we passed through; when we think of what our own children have been to us, and how much there has been of joy even in our care of them, and how much of sweetness in our sorrow in connection with them, and of rest in our labor for them, oh, what reward do we see that thou hast brought to us! and how much over and above what we have suffered! How can we enough thank thee that life begins thus at the smallest—at the seed? How can we thank thee enough for the helplessness of the infant, and for all its growing days, and for its waxing knowledge?

We thank thee that society is so organized that the strong must care for the weak; that though men in their strength are arrogant, yet little children can lead them; that they are compelled to bow down to the cradle; that they must needs humble themselves before the helpless and needy.

We rejoice in all that thou hast done for the household, and in the household. We thank thee for its purity, for its sweetness, for its light, for its joy, for all the tokens of heaven that are in it.

And we beseech of thee, Lord Jesus, again do what thou didst upon earth: take these little children into thine arms. None forbid the parents, now, to bring them; and none think that little children are too small for thy care; for thine example, and thy beneficent love have wrought more and more through the ages, till we know that God thinks of the least things. Look

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

after these little ones. May their lives and their health be precious in thy sight. And wilt thou go before them, and prepare the way for them.

Prepare the way, also, for the blessing that comes with sorrow in the parents' hearts. We beseech of thee that thou wilt be gracious to these parents. Quench not the light of that hope which they have. May they hold up these children, and behold them as angels in the sun. Holding them before the face of their Father, may they seem to them as God's little ones. May they look upon them with thee for a background. With their loving, may they think of thy loving. And so may human hearts answer to the divine throb. So may there be deepened in them a sense of what it is to be parents, and of what it is to rear children for life and immortality.

We pray that thou wilt grant, this morning, as hundreds look upon this scene, and call to mind their own children, that those whose hearts are sore and heavy yet with grief and unspent tears may have a blessing. Baptize, even with the dews of divine grace, those who mourn for their little children. And we pray that thou wilt comfort their hearts if they are heavy, and enlighten them if they are dark.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who find the burden of their life very heavy for them. Bless all parents who mourn because they can not do for their children what they would. Console those who see others bringing up their children in prosperity, and opening for them the doors of knowledge and skill, while they in their poverty and weakness and obscurity cannot do anything for those that they love so much. Lord God, may they have such a sense of thy providence, and such a trust in thee, that they shall feel sure that their Father in heaven can do for their little ones what they on earth cannot do for them.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt be with those who mourn over children that have come to them sick or deformed, and that have no prospect in life, and look with sad eyes upon the ways of men. We pray that thou wilt have mercy upon them, and give them a power of faith by which they shall see their children, not as they are in the infirmities of this mortal life, but as they shall be in the perfection of the life which is to come.

Have compassion, we beseech of thee, upon all those who have reared their children sadly, and drank deep the cup of affliction for them. Grant, O Lord, that they may have such a sense of the other life, that they may have such a sense of the great mercy of God, and of the power of the Spirit, that they shall not feel that all is lost, and that all hope is gone. We pray that thou wilt strengthen those who still come back with evil in their offspring, and lead them to a greater patience, to a conquering faith, and to a sense of God ever present—Immanuel—that shall enable them to go on from day to day, and bear as long as thou dost think it best that they shall bear.

We pray that thou wilt join us together by affection more and more. Purify our hearts, and add to our love wisdom. Bring forth faith in us; and may it be a faith that evermore works by love. May we in faith and simplicity and innocence be little children ourselves. We pray that thou wilt grant that more and more we may grow up into a manhood of true Christian experience. May the day come when from childhood our children shall be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We pray for the cradle. We pray that the paths which lead from it may lead upward, all over our land, and throughout the world.

We pray that thou wilt grant a blessing to those who give their time and strength to the teaching of the poor and ignorant. Instruct them. Strengthen them. Grant that they may reap their joy as they go along from day to day, and have no need of sympathy from others, or of any other blessing than that which they receive in doing good. May they know from their own experience that it is more blessed to give than to receive. And while

they water, may they themselves be watered. While they pour out, O Lord God, do thou pour in, that their hearts may be ever-flowing fountains, undiminished.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon this church, upon all the families in it, and upon those members of it who are scattered abroad throughout the world.

Look in compassion upon those who are present with us to-day. All that are in trouble; all that are heavily laden; all that need help of any kind—may they find thee here to-day. Look with compassion upon all who are home-sick; upon strangers in a strange land; upon all who think of their dear children left behind them. Grant to them the blessing of the presence of God, and the sanctifying influence of the Spirit. May they put all their trust in God, and feel that everything shall be well with them.

Now, Lord, we pray for thy blessing upon the further services of the sanctuary to-day, upon all our duties, and upon our labor through the week; and grant that we may go on from Sabbath to Sabbath, from Sunday to Sunday, until at last we reach that great joy-day above, whence we shall go out no more, and where we shall be forever with the Lord.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken, and grant that it may do us good. Grant that thy Word may be in us as our perpetual food, as our perpetual refreshment. May we live by our senses in the things that are needful; but may we, through the discipline of thy good inspiration, through thy Holy Ghost, learn how to educe out of the scenes and influences of the physical here, nobler and better spiritual ideals and conceptions; and when we shall have become, by thy moulding, thy kneading, thy hewing, and thy chastening hand, by stripes, by suffering, by joy, and by sorrow, meet, then be to us thyself—be to us perfection, and justification, and sanctification, and righteousness. And to thy name shall be the praise and the glory. *Amen.*

EARNING A LIVELIHOOD.

“Rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”—Eph. IV : 28.

This is the pattern of a reformed life. It is a direction of the apostle Paul. It would seem as if there had been persons who had obtained their livelihood without earning it. Indeed, it is more than intimated. The language used is suspicious of sleight of hand. “Let him that stole steal no more.” It is not necessary to be a thief to steal. There is a great deal of stealing going on in the world which is not done by thieves. There is a great deal of respectable stealing, a great deal of conventional stealing, and a great deal of artistic stealing.

It is a singular circumstance that this *stealing* is put in antithesis to *work*, as if there was a strong implication that some men do not work, and do not get an honest livelihood. Those, whatever may have been their course, who have been obtaining a livelihood in an improper way, are enjoined to obtain it in a proper way. And what is that proper way? *Labor ; earn your livelihood ; work with your hands that which is good.* More than that, it is not to be done from a sordid nor from a selfish motive ; but “that he may have to give to him that needeth”—that he may become a benefactor as well as a self-supporter.

§ We cannot too often bring the wholesome instruction of Scripture, which is in accordance with the world’s whole unbroken experience, to bear upon the minds of the young. While it is well to indoctrinate men in the great principles of religion, and in the principles of ethics, these practical questions ought to be once and again, and frequently, brought up, not simply for the sake of the young, but just as much for the sake of those who have the care of educating the young, and bringing them up.

Every man, then, according to Scripture, should earn his own living. I do not say that it is a misfortune to be born under circumstances in which one finds wealth produced around him al-

ready; but I do say that of a hundred men born to wealth, and of a hundred men born without it, to ingenuity and to labor, the chances of the laboring hundred are far better for virtue, for manliness, and for happiness, than the chances of the hundred wealthy ones. If men accept the toil of their parents, and make it a foundation on which to begin and build higher, intermitting no industry, and no enterprise, their wealth not only may not be an evil, but it may be a bounty and a blessing to them; but the great danger of coming into wealth, and growing into manhood with all means and appliances surrounding you, is that you yourself will not be developed. Since the world began, men have been incited to growth by the necessities that were around about them. So the necessity of earning a man's living is not a misfortune. They are not the children of fortune, necessarily, who are the children of wealth. They are the children of fortune whose necessity it is to put forth every exertion to develop themselves on every side.

Consider what earning one's livelihood implies; what thought, more and more, as competition makes it necessary; what ingenuity, that is schoolmaster to man himself; what patience; what faith in the future; what promptness; what punctuality; what exactness; what truth; what honesty; what self-denial. Earning a man's livelihood in the competitions of modern society is not so easy a thing. It is that which is to be accomplished by bringing into exercise almost every one of the manly virtues: virtues on the lower plane, to be sure, but virtues none the less. He who is born under such circumstances as compel him to rise early and exert himself in thought, and who endeavors to be careful, to be heedful, to be truthful, to be honest, to be temperate, to be self-deserving—such a man is the child of fortune. He has a schoolmaster in the air, ubiquitous, all around him, before him, and behind him. What are called the limitations of life are, as it were, but the chastisements that the good old schoolmaster of necessity gives to men, by which they are made to think, and to develop themselves.

The necessity of earning one's livelihood is also an effectual guard, in the greatest number of instances, from those temptations which come with leisure; with abundance; with what are called "fortunate circumstances" in life. For, although with labor there may be rudeness, and although with the leisure which labor has there may be gross indulgence, the tendencies are toward such an equilibrium of the animal spirits and the mental condition, that it is easier for a man that works to avoid evil. Not only is he healthier—and health itself is a condition of morality; not only is he happier—and happiness is a co-laborer with virtue; but he is

defended from many of those temptations which come from indolence. Not having enough to do to tire himself out heartily, has been the ruin of many and many a young man. It is a matter of great complaint, often, that one has to rise with the sun, or before it, in winter; that he has no leisure through the day; that he hardly has time to eat; and that at night he is so tired that he is glad to seek his couch and fall asleep. There may be too much of that, to be sure; but too little of it has sent ten thousand young men to the pit. The necessity of a man's earning his own livelihood is one of those great natural, moral educations which is established in nature.

Not only ought men, therefore, to earn their own livelihood, but they ought to labor with their hands when, in the economy of God's providence, that is indicated as the best and most facile way for them. Labor is honorable. The vast bulk of mankind must depend upon labor. The stores on which we live are all hidden in the bosom of nature, and we must draw them thence. Mere exchanging is never going to support the race. It is production that must support the race; and there can be no production without labor, and without, to a large degree, hand-labor.

There is no degradation in labor. If performed with moral qualities, it exalts the character. It directly adds, not only to the product and welfare of society, but to the dignity and happiness of the man that works.

Now, labor has had a hard time in this world. In earlier ages, it was disesteemed as since it has been. It was disesteemed by the Greeks, who owned slaves. It was disesteemed by the Romans, who also owned slaves. You never can have labor reputable when the laborer is owned. The degradation of work has always been the result of holding men in bondage, in captivity. So there has come down to us through the ages the impression that work is a sign of vulgarity; that it betokens inferiority; and therefore men have been ashamed to work.

There have been a few occupations which have been regarded as honorable in all ages. Husbandry has been the subject of the songs of poets since Roman days, and before. The shepherd's life, or the life of the husbandman, has always been esteemed honorable. Virgil and Columella sang these themes with great earnestness. Cincinnatus was highly honored as a man of the plow.

But, for the most part, mechanics have been disesteemed; and men of labor, in almost all nations of the world, have been regarded as below the line of honor. That notable nation from which we have derived more good sense and more examples worthy of follow-

ing than from any or all others—the Jewish nation—stands pre-eminent in this, that it has always honored labor. It always made it reputable to be a laborer. Nay, the Jews, as a part of the education of their children, taught them all some manual craft; so that if their resources failed, there should be no Jewish child who should not be able to do something, or make something.

Now, I hold that, for reasons which I shall mention, little by little the stigma is rolling off from labor; that little by little work is becoming esteemed and honorable. Men are beginning to find that a man can be a workman and yet not a drudge. Drudgery is to be disesteemed. He who toils as an ox toils, may count himself brother to the ox. He who treads the road of industry as an ass does, may consider himself asinine. But no man ought to be a drudge. What is a drudge? It is a man who performs work by the hand, and not by the manhood that is in him. It is a man who does not mingle ingenuity with his work. A man who works, hating his work; a man who works as if he were a machine; or a man who works with his hands, and with nothing else—he drudges. He is not honorable. But a man who works with his hand, controlling his work with his head; a man who works with his hand, and has his conscience behind it; a man who works with his hand, and has a benevolent motive, that he may relieve those who are less fortunate than himself—such a man is honorable, and his labor is full not only of manly quality, but of moral quality as well.

It is not necessary that a man should labor always for self—that degrades any one; but if a man labors with his hands in useful avocations, he is a benefactor of society.

Yet, there is an almost universal disposition among men to avoid manual work because there is in it so little excitement. Men say, “I was born to better things; and I want to do something which will stimulate my understanding, whet my reason, develop my ingenuity. I want to do something that shall bring out the whole man which is in me; but the work, and the only work, which I can perform will not do it. All my faculties do not concentrate in any such work as that.”

Blessed is the man whose labor is of such a kind that the work itself gives employment to every part of his nature. There are many kinds of manual labor, in the foundry, in the machine-shop, in the laboratory, in the builder’s trade, in those occupations by which the necessities of life are supplied, which furnish a field for the exercise of a man’s whole mind. The man at the loom, the man at the palette, the man that moulds the vase, the man who

in a thousand ways is producing objects of art and beauty and use, may find scope for his thought and feeling.

If I were a cabinet-maker, do you suppose I would think of nothing but the thing I was working on? Do you believe I could construct a cradle, and my heart not sing lullaby all the time for the little ones that should bless it, and whose eyes, looking out of it, should be as stars shining up instead of stars shining down, and should speak of immortality as the heavens which declare the glory of God do not know how to do it? Is it necessary that I should saw, or plane, or rub, and do nothing but saw, and plane, and rub? Is there no living power in a man's work? Is there nothing in it to stir up his imagination? If I built a man's house, would the one question be how much I could earn for so much work? If I put my heart in my work, am I not a benefactor? When a man builds a house, if he pleases he can build it for the good of those who are to dwell in it, and leave a blessing in it; but if a man in building a house says to himself, every time he drives a nail, "How can I put a poor one in instead of one that costs more," acting all the time under the influence of the devil of selfishness in his work, I do not marvel that it is drudgery to him. I do not marvel that he finds very little incitement in it. But if a man goes to his work as if he were called of God to do it; if it is taste, and conscience, and benevolence that work in him, then his labor is all the time a school of blessing to him.

There is scope in the poorest mechanical employments for far more manhood than we are accustomed to put into our work; and one thing that I blame men for is that they put so little of the better part of themselves into mechanical employments. You think, because a man is sitting in his study, and pursuing his professional avocations, that he can expand and open up his mind; but there may be as many sordid men among scholars as in any other class. Yet it is possible in any sphere for a man to put into his work the best part of himself.

I have a fancy that the thing which a man does in this life carries something of the man with it. If I go into a house that is tall, gaunt, cold, unsocial, I say to myself, "I cannot tell who were the architect and builder of this house; but of this I am certain, that they are cold, bloodless men, and that they left their stain on their work." If, on the other hand, I go into a house that is cosy and genial, I say, "The man who built this house had a heart, and he left some of it behind him." You can always see something of a man in his work.

People tell us that they can read a man's disposition in his

handwriting. In other words, style carries something of the man. There is a proverb that *style is the man*. When I see a picture, I say, "I know something about the man who painted this picture." There is something about his work that reveals certain of his characteristics to me. And so it is in labor. Everybody leaves something about his work by which, more or less perfectly, you can read his peculiarities.

If, then, you are a stingy, selfish, dishonest man, your work will show it, in its scantiness and lack of certain qualities. But you have the power of putting yourself kindly, and good-naturedly, and heartily into your work, and so of rendering service to somebody, you do not know whom. When a man makes a plate, let him say, "May there be happiness and joy in the heart of him who eats off from this plate." When a man makes a cup, let him say, "May he be blessed who drinks out of this cup." Let a man, as he gives the last touch of beauty to any work of art, say, "May this give pleasure and comfort to somebody." The true cabinet-maker, as he constructs a piece of furniture, thinks of the welfare of the one who is to use it, and works for it, and prays for it. Do not you suppose that if mechanical operations were thus dealt with there would be a difference in work? Would not the various occupations be better served if men were educated in this matter? Now men work sordidly, meanly, selfishly; and I do not wonder that they do not like to work, and that they reluctant.

Then, again, men do not like manual labor because, in the order of forces the worker ranks below the thinker. There is a perverted form of the democratic instinct in our time. Everybody says, "I am as good as the next man. I am just as good a man as any other in this town. All men are free and equal." I beg your pardon; all men are not free, in the first place, in point of fact; and certainly all men are not equal. They are not equal in height, nor in weight, nor in productive capacity, nor in virtue, nor in courage, nor in honor, nor in any other of the qualities which go to make up manhood. "What, then, do you repudiate that maxim?" Yes, in this scope I do. If you say that every man has a right to his freedom, I accept that. If you believe that all men are equal before the law, that is so. A true law is one which makes no distinction of class or rank, and has the same commands and penalties for men of all classes from the top to the bottom. In that sense men are equal severally before the law. But men are not equal in capacity any more than in size, in another sense. And when a man says, "I am as good as the next man," it may be so, and it may not be so. But when the universal man says, "I am as good as everybody else," it is a lie. There are infinite gradations among men in this respect.

Therefore, men are unwilling to take hold of those tasks which they think will sink them (such is the popular opinion of tasks) below men whom they think that they are equal with. Ah! it is how proud you are that usually ranks you in your own esteem. It is not how useful you are. "Let every man think of himself according to the measure of faith," says the apostle. He ranks men according to the higher qualities of true manhood. But men do not rank themselves thus. They rank themselves by the standard of pride, and are unwilling to adopt any vocation which will put them "below" what they call their fellow-men.

Now, there is a natural law in this matter. Men are ranked according to the part of their brain which is the most productive. The grand blunder of the Commune and of the International theories consists in the supposition that men can be made to stand on the same level, whom God did not make of the same force; and that all men can have precisely the same remuneration, who do not contribute the same quantities to society; and that the same values attach to manual work which attach to other work; that the things which are produced by the bottom of the brain should bring as much as those which are produced by the top. The fact is, that the products of the bottom of the brain are cheapest. That is, the most productive part of mankind is the animal part. And the more productive a thing is, the cheaper its products are. As you go up toward the artistically spiritual, the products of the mind have a higher value, whether you measure them by moral forces, and by the impressions which they produce upon men, or by their rarity, and consequent marketable value.

A man shears sheep. There are five hundred men in his township who can do the same work. The wool, when once it is sheared, is sent to be manufactured—scoured, cleaned, dyed, spun. It is to be woven into a fabric; but there are not five hundred men who can weave that wool into an exquisite piece of cloth. The man who can do it has something in him finer than the man who can simply shear the wool. He has more skill. He has more educated faculties. He has more experience, which is only another name for education.

Why, then, is the wool in the form of cloth of so much more value than the wool before it is woven into cloth? Why is the man who weaves paid more than the man who shears? The man that shears is paid a dollar a day, and the man who knows how to weave gets his two and three dollars a day. What makes the difference in their remuneration? It is occasioned by the difference which there is between the part of the brain which one sells, and the part

of the brain which the other sells. The man who sells work with but little thought in it gets a low price, and the man who sells work with a great deal of thought in it, and fine thought at that, gets a higher price.

This law of precedence in prices, though many times it is undeveloped, and hindered by conventions and false usages, is the law which largely prevails in the community. There is a law in society which never can be put down, which cannot be avoided nor evaded, and it is this—the law that as a man's work goes up in quality of mind and brain force, the price and estimation of it go up.

But suppose a man of great culture and great excellence is, in the providence of God, compelled to engage in some ordinary occupation? I once saw, in Ohio, an eminently educated gentleman on the highway breaking stone for a macadamized road. One would naturally say, "Here is a man of notable qualities, of rare excellence, and he gets but his dollar a day for breaking stone; and yet you say that it is the quality of a man, which he puts into his work, and the part of his brain which he brings to it, that determine the price which he receives." My reply to that implied argument is this: that if your work is of such a kind that you can put only a part of yourself into it, the rest of yourself must be developed outside of it in some other way.

A man will be ranked according to that which he shows of himself in his work. A man will be ranked according to the amount which he manifests of thinking power, and moral power, and civil power. And yet, over and above these he may develop power in other directions. A man may be a digger of ditches, a hewer of wood, or a drawer of water, and may be ranked low; and yet, at the same time, he may have ability as a speaker, and may have civil excellences, so that if he had the opportunity he would show himself to be vastly more a man than is indicated by his ordinary work, and would be ranked higher.

But the popular impression is this: that there are some places which, if a man stands in them, will make him honorable. If a man is a day-laborer on a farm, or on a railroad, men say of him, "He is only a workman. I do not want my boy to go down where he is to get a livelihood." But many say, "If a man is a mechanic, an inventor, a founder of metal, he is a great deal higher than a workman. I would let my boy go there." Now and then a man, however, who has worked all his life long in the store, in the shop, in the tallow-chandler's factory, or on shipboard, says, "I have always been a hard worker, and I have got something together, and I am going to give my boy advantages which I never had, and make a lawyer or a

doctor or a minister out of him." The impression is that if you can put a boy into this groove or that, the groove carries honor. It is supposed that the position will do more for him than he can do for himself. It is presumed that if a man goes into a liberal profession, he will be a liberal, large, fertile man. This is a false idea, and one which has proved to be a curse to many and many a young man. For, as soon as it is found that there is a pigmy in the profession, he is dropped out of it. There are five hundred thousand blossoms on one apple-tree, and perhaps three hundred of them bear fruit. All the rest drop and go down to the ground, and are good for nothing except for show and beauty. And do you notice how it is with that big tree of law? It blossoms all over every year with candidates. There are a multitude of abortive blossoms, and only here and there one bears fruit. You know how it is with all the liberal professions. Young men go into them because they are considered honorable; but there are comparatively few that stay in them. Men think that the honor belongs to the profession, but the moment they begin to exert themselves in its affairs many of them prove to be shams, and fail, and drop down to the bottom. Men are measured by what they do. If a man has force, he shows it by the results which he produces. The amount of it—whether it is small or great; and the character of it—whether it is high or low—these things are also shown by those results. And there is no such thing as cheating in this matter. You cannot use your higher brain and rank with men who use their lower; and you cannot use your lower brain and rank with men who use their higher. This is a law, not of men but of God.

Moreover, men are reluctant to work with their hands, because they see that wealth is achieved faster, and in larger measure, in other ways. Men are far more anxious to be rich than they are to be good or popular. They say, "You may preach as much as you have a mind to against riches, but I think you yourself would be willing to be rich. I never heard a minister deride wealth, who objected to taking a big salary. I have heard ministers warn people against money; but they never seemed to be afraid of getting it themselves."

All this may be perfectly true; but it only goes to show that ministers are just like anybody else. Men are of "like passions," as the apostle said. They are alike in their persons. They are apt to be just as foolish one as another; just as selfish; just as easily tempted by wealth; just as liable to make mistakes, and to reap the penalties of those mistakes.

But I have never derided wealth. I have never cautioned you

against it. I have rather exhorted you, if in the providence of God you had opened to you opportunities for acquiring wealth, to improve them. I have not only stimulated you to the acquisition of wealth, but I have urged you to employ it, having first consecrated it. I should as soon think of going into my barn-yard and saying "O Alderneys! be careful about giving too much milk," as I should think of saying to men, "Avoid getting rich." I do not care how much milk my cows have. If it is good rich milk, the more there is of it the better I like it. I have never exhorted men not to seek wealth; but I have said to men, "Riches alone do not make manhood, nor produce happiness." A man may be rich and be a fool. A man may be rich and be miserable. Not only is it necessary to know how to make wealth, but it is necessary to know what is seldom learned, how to administer it. There are a hundred men that know how to make wealth where there is one that knows how to use it, or how to enjoy it. There are few who know how to use what they have earned and saved so as to convert it into an instrument of personal culture. The art of making wealth render you manly and noble is seldom known.

See, therefore, what wisdom and insight there was in the words of the apostle, when he said, "Let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The teaching is, that wealth is to make us bountiful and productive in moral quality.

On the other hand, there is the insane notion that if a man only has money that is enough, no matter what else he lacks. This notion has been the ruin of tens of thousands of young men. Men sacrifice manhood when they sacrifice true integrity in order that they may clutch wealth, and clutch it suddenly. They say, "Only let me have that, and I will run the risk. Give me enough money, and I will take my chance of happiness."

But money cannot make a man happy. I do not care whose hand is flung across the harp; if there be no chords, there will be no music, though the hand were that of Orpheus. I do not care what influences are thrown across your heart; if those qualities which God meant should produce happiness are not there, they cannot make you happy. The conditions of happiness must exist, or there can be no happiness.

Sudden wealth, and great wealth, are the expectation of thousands of men who leave the farm or the shop in the country, and throng the city. The result of these false ideas is reluctance on the part of men to work at manual labor, patiently earning comparatively but little, and living as they go along by the develop-

ment of their manhood and of themselves through their work. These notions produce an unfortunate state of things. They direct attention more and more to the rapid and easy acquisition of wealth; and as society grows more populous, there are multitudes who are begging employment in our cities for whom there is very little employment.

Why, between the seasons of business, I suppose there are thousands of young men—I do not know but five thousand—from twenty to thirty years of age, who have nothing to do. New York is full of them. I do not speak with disrespect of them. I merely say that here are one, two, three, four, five, ten thousand young men thronged together in New York; and I say to them, “Can you do a day’s work on a farm?” “No,” they say, “I never learned that.” “Are you good on ship-board?” No, I have never been to sea; I could not stand that.” “Can you work the loom?” “No.” “Can you make a shoe?” “No.” “Do you know anything about blacksmithing?” “No.” “Can you make a chair?” “No.” “Are you good as a tailor?” “No, sir.” “Can you lath and plaster?” “No.” “Can you build a house?” “No.” “Is there anything on God’s earth that you can make?” “No, not a thing.” “What can you do, then?” “Well, I have been brought up to book-keeping—to merchandizing.” That is a respectable business. I do not deride it. I do not blame a young man for going into business. Neither do I blame him—though I pity him—when business is slack, and he is high and dry, because he has been brought up to that, in labor, of which there is a superfluity, and has learned nothing else, and can do nothing else.

This trouble does not exist in New York any more than in Boston, and Cincinnati, and Philadelphia, and Baltimore, and Chicago, and St. Louis, and Louisville, and San Francisco. In all large cities, the world around, there are multitudes of men that are waiting for an opportunity to earn a living, who do not know how to do a single thing in the nature of productiveness. They cannot produce anything. They would starve on a hundred acres of land, because they do not know how to raise corn. They would be houseless, and freeze to death, if they lived in a lumber-yard, because they do not know how to nail two boards together. They would go bare-foot with any amount of leather about them, because they do not know how to make a shoe. They are fools at a blacksmith’s forge, on a ship, or in a shop. Give them a pen, and they are quite at home. They can make out an account as an entry clerk. They can perform the duties of a bookkeeper. These are very good things, very necessary things; but there are five times as many men

seeking such employment as there are positions to be filled. On the other hand, there are abundant opportunities for work in departments where they do not want to go. They want something lighter, something easier, something more respectable than manual labor. But is it respectable to be nine months out of twelve without business? I tell you, the contented German, who sits in his little six-by-nine shop, singing Luther's hymns, and sewing and patching shoes, is more respectable than that young man who left his father's farm before he had learned to work on it, and came to New York, where he had two or three good years, and then was thrown out of employment, and has had no regular business since, and goes about asking, "Can you get me a place in the Custom-house?"—fool's paradise! "Can you get me a place in the Navy-yard?" "Is there not a place in Washington that you can get for me?"

I wish you could stay in my house for a month, and hear the applications that I have made to me by people who are out of business to get them employment. You know I have so much influence! About half of New York think I own Washington, and Central Park, and Prospect Park, and the Brooklyn Navy-yard, and the New York Custom-house, and sundry other great inheritances, and feel, if they do not get a position in one of these places when they apply, that it is on account of sheer ugliness on my part! I never say No, or turn away a well-meaning young man from my door, without a sigh. And yet, I think about these things.

Men and brethren, there are not enough young men so brought up that they know how to work. I feel the intimate connection which there is between working and morality. I feel the substantial sinfulness of men who lead indolent and useless lives. I honor men of the shop. I honor men of the soil. I honor men of the sea. And I say to young men's parents, "It is a shame for you to bring up boys and girls without teaching their hands how to earn themselves bread! I do not care if you are worth a million dollars, your child ought to know how to work as much as anybody else's child. Your boy may yet beg his bread, though to-day you can enable him to walk in royal apparel. It is a shame not to bring up a girl to know how to work for her living. It is a shame for a girl to be ashamed to work for a living. It is a shame for a young woman not to be willing to be a chambermaid, a washerwoman, a cook, or anything else that is honest, by which her livelihood may be gained. Every young man should know how to use his hands; how to make his head inventive; how to apply himself so as to gain a living honestly. Versatility of knowledge in matters of

industry is important. A man should know how to earn a livelihood in different ways. And we ought to teach our children so that if one resource fails, there shall be another; and so that if that fails, there shall be another, however slender, and however little productive; so that they shall not be obliged to beg, nor do that which is next door to it, steal.

Parents, I wish my voice could be heard all over the land in this matter. In one thing I would have you Judaize. In one thing I would be glad if you would go back to the age of Moses. The Jews had the proverb—and there was a wholesome marrow in it—“He who brings up his child without a trade, brings him up to steal”; and I say to parents, “If you bring up your children without knowing how to labor with their hands, and how to earn their own living, you bring them up to be beggars or thieves”—and I hardly know that there is any difference between those classes in moral excellence or moral unworth.

If, therefore, there has been a false estimate formed of work among the young; if you have felt that it was the sign of a gentleman not to work, and that you were too gentlemanly to do it, I beg of you, think again of this matter. This is a workingman's nation. Men are pouring in here from every part of the world, with the little of their earnings in their hands; and they are coming to work out their fortunes. The stories tell us about men that go out to *seek* their fortunes; but in America the term *work out* is better.

Do not be ashamed of a farm. Do not be ashamed of a trade. Do not be ashamed of anything but idleness, dependence upon other folks, polite beggary, and knavery. Of these be heartily ashamed.

“What shall I do? I must live!” says the young man. No, it is not necessary that you should live. Bees are good legislators. When a drone gets into the hive, and he will not work, and does not make honey, nor do anything else, the other bees sting him to death. “Well—but—must I commit suicide?” I do not say that; but I say, “Eat the bread you earn, or else do not eat.” Some of you may die, and some of you may live; and if you live, begin a better life. Be ashamed to be dependent. Be ashamed of crooked ways. Be ashamed of indirections. Feel that to take care of yourself is honorable. Desire and strive to do it by the highest methods; but be willing to do it by the second highest, or the third, or the fourth, or the fifth, rather than not do it at all. Be willing to do that which you can do, down to the bottom, till you come to be a laborer on the road, or in the canal, rather than beg. Work, *work*.

WORK out, not only your own salvation, but your own subsistence. Work out your living, and so work out your manhood. And bring up your children to do the same thing. And in the generation which is yet to come, let us be done with those miserable eunuchs that have been the product of slavery in our midst. Let us have men of bone, and muscle, and sturdy independence. Let us have men that eat their bread from the sweat of their brow. Let us have men that can lift their hard hands at last in praise and thanksgiving that they are hands that never took a penny that they did not earn.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.-

ALMIGHTY GOD, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God. We rejoice in thy immutability, in which thou dost dwell eternally strong, forever young, and good, without variableness or shadow of turning. All that thou hast is for us, here or hereafter. We are heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. All the fellowship of the blessed in heaven is for us. All its hopes are with us upon earth, and the fruitious wait for us. We are walking over rude paths and rough ways, at times beset, wandering from the path, and yet brought back again, with toils, with burdens, amid tears—often with sorrows in over-measure. And yet, it is the convoy of thy providence. We believe that thou art in the affairs of men, and dost overrule them. All laws and all things are in thy hands; and thou art employing them; and the ways, thou thyself dost know, though we know them not; and all is for those who are thy children, in whom thou art developing the immortal life, and whom thou art preparing by thy patience and love for that life beyond the grave where the Spirit dwells. To thy care, paternal, to thy love, ineffable, to thy wisdom, transcending all bounty of human knowledge, we commit ourselves. Lord God, we would be thine. Be thou our Father. Make us obedient to thy will. Work in us to will and to do thy pleasure.

We pray that as we go from day to day in life, it may not seem as though we were going from the paradise of youth to the desert of old age. May it seem, rather, as if we were going from the times of inexperience, from the callow days of our life, toward the realm of wisdom, and power, and attainment in the life to come. Grant that we may not feel, as sense after sense weakens, as we perceive the cords of this tabernacle loosening, that we are wending our way to the houseless land. We have a house not builded with hands, eternal in the heavens. We have friends upon whom hath rested long the ripening light of the heavenly land. How many of us have divided our households! How many of our children are with God; how many that have taught us; how many that have companioned with us on the way; how many whose absence we mourn, have simply gone on before us, and are awaiting our coming in the blessed land!

O grant that we may feel in life courage and hope and blessed assurance. If there be any who desire to walk in the right way, O Lord, thou that hast

compassion upon the infirmities of men, and dost pity them, as a father pities his children, help them to fulfill every right impulse; to carry out every noble resolution; to leave off every easily-besetting sin; to repent of whatever is wrong, and take hold of whatever is right. If there be those who are beginning, but who attain slowly, and have reached so little that they are well-nigh discouraged, grant that they may not be overwhelmed by the greatness of the way, nor listen to despondency, nor take counsel of doubt or fear. May they believe that God is mightier than all adversaries, and put their trust in him, and go forward.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those who are laboring for thy cause, and on whom thy name rests, and in whom is thy Spirit. May thy husbandry in their hearts be more and more fruitful; more and more reap the abundance thereof. We beseech of thee that thou wilt give them faith, and hope, and courage, and gratitude, and self-devotion. And we pray that thou wilt put it into the hearts of thy people to do even greater things than we have done. May we be willing to labor diligently in the cause of the Master. It is good to serve thee—good while we are serving, good on the way, and, beyond all expression, good in the life that is to come.

And now, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon every one in thy presence as he needs. And take the measure not from us, but from thyself. Do exceeding abundantly more for us than we can ask or think. And grant that when this life shall be over, none of us may be afraid to die; none of us may die in gloom and darkness. May we have the light of thy countenance, and hear thy voice calling from the farther shore, and go down through the valley and across the Jordan, and into the promised land, and rejoice to be with the Lord.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of instruction, and grant that those who have listened to it may have listened as for their life. May their conscience, may their honor, may their sense of true manhood be aroused. We pray for nobler men and women. We pray for all those influences which shall inspire a nobler generation than that to which we belong. May thy truth have free course everywhere, inspiring men to the life that now is, and preparing them for the life that is to come. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

MOTIVES OF ACTION.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."—1 COR. x., 31.

Paul lived in a time of grand transition. On the one side, from the religious system of the Jews, which was fairly armored in ceremonies, and sealed all over with ordinances, a transition was to be made toward some degree of personal liberty. It was a problem in psychology, how a man could become religious by the legitimate use of his reason, his moral sentiments and his God-given nature.

In escaping out of that system into the largeness, the automatic condition of the Christian ideal, there were a thousand strings that had to be untied—a thousand links that had to be sundered. And you all know that men's consciences are sensitive in proportion to the definiteness of the thing on which they have centered. So that, if a man has been brought up from his youth to feel that it is a conscientious duty to cross himself, to discontinue so simple and so understandable a thing on which the conscience has rested, will be a grief to his conscience a hundred times more perceived and felt than it would be to neglect a great principle. We are familiar with the fact every day, that men feel very little conscientiousness in the violation of a great principle which is invisible, but feel excessive conscientiousness in the neglect of an act which is visible. That is, conscience acts with the senses far more powerfully than with the reason and the moral, internal judgment.

On the other side, Christianity stood as a vital force, winning to itself those who had been idolatrously brought up, and had lived in the indulgence both of superstition and the various passions and appetites which belonged to heathen worship. In the particular instance before us (without neglecting, doubtless, the Jews—for they constituted a portion of every church that was gathered, and often the chief portion), the apostle specially argued with the Gentile converts, answering such questions as these: "How shall

we act when we have been invited to a feast, where, according to the heathen custom, meat has been blessed, and where the cup has been poured out as a libation to the gods? Shall we touch these things? And again, when we go to buy meat in the market, where heathen butchers have, according to their custom, marked their meat, or where it bears the priestly mark, and has been consecrated, in that way, to some heathen god, which is nothing but an idol, shall we dare to take the meat which is thus marked (and it is all marked) and to eat it?"

What does Paul say in reference to this matter? Well, he gives a great many special directions about it. He says, for instance, "In so far as you are concerned, if you want a steak, go to the market, if nobody knows anything about it, and get it, and take it home, and eat it, and ask no questions about it, and give yourself no anxiety on the subject." But if you are invited out to dine, and the host offers you meat, and says, 'This meat is dedicated to Jupiter,' and you know that if you eat it you will be understood as worshipping Jupiter, do not touch it; because you are put in a position where your eating it will be taken as an act of worship. All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. There is no harm in the thing itself of eating meat, whether it comes from the temple or from the shambles. It may have the mark of the god, or it may be without the mark of the god—that is nothing. But you must consider when and where you eat it. Consider not only your own conscience, but other people's consciences; and do the thing which is pleasurable and kind."

Finally, he sums up the whole matter in this way:

"Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

In other words, do not bewilder yourself with endless discussions in respect to duty, in regard to this act, or that act, or the other act. Do not minify your life, or fritter away your power, by incessantly going into an argument about ordinances, as to whether you may or may not go in this or that direction. Take a grand aim; let that aim be the honor and glory of God; and then go forward. Whatever you do, no matter whether you are dealing with heathenism or Judaism, or kings, or law, or anything else, take an aim higher than these things, or than the various casuistries which are raised in connection with them. Strive for the honor and glory of God, and then push ahead. That is the way in which the text lies bedded in the context.

Take notice, then, that this passage was not designed to bind the conscience, but to loose it. It was not designed to narrow the

sphere of man in moral influence, but to augment and enlarge that sphere. It was a prescription of the apostle, not to make men more exceedingly anxious, but to relieve them of anxiety, and give them a much more liberal view of life and duty. He opens the way to the release of men from a thousand ties and obligations which had a superstitious origin, and sets their conscience on a plane of liberty, delivering them from the casuistry of ordinances or old customs.

When, therefore, you come to this passage, you must come to it in the spirit in which it was uttered. It was applied to the affairs of life more minutely than anything that had gone before: and men were led to think, at every step, "Now, whether I eat or whether I drink, or whatever I do, I must do all to the glory of God." Acting in accordance with an extreme interpretation of this injunction, a man says, "I think I will go out and get a bucket of water;—but stop! Am I going out to get that bucket of water for the glory of God?" He stops and thinks whether he is fulfilling the divine command in this act. A man says, "I believe I will go and get me a new suit of clothes;—but am I really moved, in going to get that suit of clothes, by a desire to glorify God?" A farmer says, "Next week we will gather in all the apples from our orchard"; and then he hesitates, and wonders whether it is his purpose to do it to the glory of God. He does not exactly see the connection between the two things, but he hopes that, somehow, such a connection exists.

So men interpret that passage which was meant for liberty: which was meant for release; which was meant to take a man out from the sphere of a morbid conscience and casuistical questionings, and give him a large and grand object to keep in view—men interpret that passage, sometimes, in such a way as to swamp themselves in an endless examination into their motives. And they say, whenever they do anything, "Am I acting right? Am I impelled by this or that consideration?" The spirit of this passage is, first, toward liberty of conscience, and not toward the bondage of conscience.

It proposes, secondly, for men, a general direction, supposed to be always within the reach of every man—namely, In the transfer of your life from Judaism to Christianity, or from heathenism to Christianity, or from selfishness to godliness, do not meddle with these minor and special difficulties; but set before yourselves this grand end—the honor and glory of God. Keep that steadily in view. Settle all questions of duty in such a way as you think will best please Him. That will release

you, generically, from the consideration of anything special. Rather than distress and perplex yourselves with certain questions which are continually arising, and which cannot be settled by discussion, aim at that grand center, God's glory, and go forward with that as your guiding light.

The having, as an object of our endeavor, God's glory, can be nothing other than an attempt to please God, and to obey his laws, so far as they have been made known to us. We cannot make God glorious, we cannot add anything to the divine glory, in any way but by unfolding to men the beauty and grandeur of his character. Ordinarily, in Scripture, gloryfying God signifies pleasing him by obedience to his known wishes. No other glory than this is possible to us.

In Matthew, the subject of perfection is spoken of, and God is described as a Being that is perfect in regard to benevolence; and the command is, "Be ye perfect in that way." He is described as One who makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust, alike. He is represented as bestowing upon all men universal bounty and kindness. We are given to understand that such is God's idea of perfection; and we are commanded to be perfect in that direction.

Now, so far as we are concerned, we can only promote God's glory by complying with his wishes—by obeying his commands. To know his will is simply to know the laws which are prescribed for us.

A king is made glorious by the obedience of the subjects throughout his realm. He is honored in that way. The parent is honored by the child. How? Not by his running around the neighborhood, and saying, "Oh, what a great man my father is!" or "What a beautiful woman my mother is!" or "What a splendid house my father has to live in!" For a child to do that would be ridiculous. We like to see a child manifest warmth and affection toward his parents; but publishing such things in the streets about one's parents is not glorifying those parents. If a child loves and honors his parents, he shows it by studiously fulfilling their known wishes. An affectionate and loving child does honor his parents in the eyes of all the neighborhood. The teacher is honored, not by what the pupil says, but by what he does. Find out what they want who are put over you, and do that; and then you honor them. And we honor, or, what is the same thing, we glorify, God by fulfilling his known commands.

We may illustrate the general spirit of our text by such instruction as our government is accustomed to give to its ministers

abroad. Thus, it will send a minister to the Court of St. James with special directions on certain points; and say to him, in regard to his other duties, "Do that which will, in your judgment, be most conducive to the honor and interest of the nation that you represent," leaving much in that general way to his discretion. It will send another to the Court in Paris, and say, "Make a treaty that shall include such and such special advantages to commerce: so far as all the other questions which may come up are concerned, we cannot instruct you. Do that which you think will be for the best interest of the United States." Many things are left to his wisdom.

The command of the Bible, in such a passage as this, is, Amid all the thousand questions of life, ask yourself, What is the will of my God? What are his laws? What are the divine rules by which I am to be governed? Ascertain what these are, and then settle your casuistry by aiming to fulfill them.

The question, then, for every man to ask himself, is this: "What are my duties? What are the laws which God has laced me in with on every side?" And having answered these questions, he should say: "Let me aim at obedience to these laws: so I shall fulfill my duty, and honor my God." But it is not required that one should think of him in every act. It is not required that one should be conscious that the motive in each particular case is to please God—as we shall see in the sequel.

This leads to the supreme question of motives. Ordinarily, men regard a motive as the inducement by which any act or course of action is procured. It is supposed to be that which draws out of a man a line of conduct. But this is a wrong notion. Motives are not external. Actions are. That which stirs up in a faculty a desire for anything, however, may be objective. For instance, we say that gold is the motive which impels the miser. No; gold certainly is that which has the effect of waking up avarice in the miser, but his will is working in him the desire of acquisition; and the motive power is the faculty, and not the thing which set the faculty in motion.

The food which is presented to us addresses itself to the sense of hunger. We say that a man works because he wants food. In one sense, and in a general sense, that is true; but, after all, the truth is, that hunger, or a given craving of a man's body, is the thing which moves him toward the food. Food may suggest it, and supply it; but the power is in the man himself, and it is hunger.

So objects presented to a man's sense of praise may stir up a

desire for praise; but it is that desire for praise, or love of praise, original, creative, fundamental, universal, which is the motive of his actions. The question, therefore, becomes, not this, What end induces such a course of action? but simply this, What faculties worked in such a course of action? Thus you get back to the philosophic ground: Which were the faculties that worked? And *then* you can ask, What was it that started those faculties? But, ordinarily speaking, men confound things, and think that the external objective was the motive; whereas the living power is something in the organization of the man himself.

The doctrine of the action of the faculties is so intimately connected with the whole scheme of Christian casuistry that it will be wise for me to speak a word of instruction on that subject.

First, every faculty in its own sphere is right; and right and wrong, so far as any faculty is concerned, consist not in its action, but in the degree of its activity, and in the end or purpose for which it acts. A man slays a fellow man. Slaying is not wicked in and of itself; for, in the course of time, the man that slew will himself be slain. Justice will finally overtake the criminal even here—if he lives long enough! In one case the act is murder. In the other case it is execution. I take from a store an object of great value, and carry it home. Another man takes it and carries it home. In both cases the action is precisely the same; but there is a special reason why that man is a thief, and I am not. The reason does not lie in the action, but in something outside of it.

All through the whole economy of life you can reckon one thing as a truism—that God has never put a faculty into the mind of a man which is not, in its own sphere and degree, right. If it be wrong, it is because it is acting out of the proper degree, and out of its own sphere.

All the faculties of the mind, then, are useful. They are so many implements which we have a right to use. They were given to us for benign purposes. The whole human soul is an organization for wisdom; and you cannot take out of a man any single part, and leave the rest good. In other words, as you cannot take the smallest wheel, or any pivot or screw out of a watch, and have it a perfect watch, so you cannot take out of a man any faculty, and have him a perfect man as God meant that he should be. Every part of a man is useful; only it is to be used right, and in right conditions.

Many faculties act, I remark secondly, in regard to the other faculties, with co-operation, or with a normal alternation.

Many men say, "What was the motive by which I was guided or directed"? And when they look into their minds there is a perfect jumble of motives, as they interpret them. A man says, "I am afraid I was not actuated by right motives; for I can discern the traces of other motives."

Now, I remark, that the normal activity of the mind, in every case, is the result, not of a single faculty, but of all the faculties. The almost inevitable, and the almost universal action of the mind, is produced by masses of faculties; by faculties in groups; by bands of faculties. There is hardly any action that belongs to a man's life which is a single one—which is not complex. Almost all the faculties act in platoons, with leaders and subordinates.

A man says, "I do not think I was right, because I see there was pride in my motive." Very likely there was; but that may not invalidate your action. He says, "I may have had some personal interest that actuated me in the course which I pursued." Very likely you had; but that may not invalidate your intent either. The motives from which a man acts operate in groups.

Men's thoughts and feelings and fancies flow together. The mind is a subtle thing. The analysis of it is difficult. The revolution of forces which go to make up the process of your thought in a single hour is a more stupendous work than any that was ever performed in a laboratory. There are no substances in life which are comparable for wonderful subtleness, for volume and importance, with the activities of this cerebral mass. Marvelous beyond all conception is the mind, that, every single hour, sees such permutations; such combinations; such changes, so rapidly effected; such alternations of parts; such interlacings; such flashing and subsidence of fancies; such risings and fallings of hope; such comings and goings of fear; such experiences of pleasure and pain; such glancings hither and thither of thoughts and feelings; such endless complications of forces! If it were possible for a man to put sensitized paper in his hat, and have everything that he thought or felt stamp itself thereon, the journal of an hour thus recorded it would take him two days to read, there would be so much of it. And how strange would be the unfolding of the activities of this wonderful agent! How beyond all comprehension are the hidden processes which work in such combinations and in such directions, coming and going; uniting together and separating again; forming new scenes momentarily, like the light which at night twinkles and crinkles and dances on the undulating surface of the water! How indescribably marvelous are the versatility, the fruitfulness and the complications of the human soul! And

yet, men are troubled because there is not a singleness of motive which inspires their action !

A man says, "I am afraid I do not do all that I do from that single motive, a desire to honor and glorify God. I think I have detected something else!" Oh, you have detected something else, have you? You are like an owl that creeps out of the tree about 10 o'clock in the morning and hoots, and says, "I think I see the sun's light somewhere." One would suppose that it might be light at that time—to anything but an owl!

Thirdly, the power of any action in men depends, not on the singleness, philosophically speaking, of any faculty, but on a combination of faculties. I have spoken of the fact of the endless combinations that take place in all actions. Now, I say that the very value of activity results from these combinations. Instead of other faculties invalidating any course of conduct, or making it inferior, its strength and richness and value depend upon the other faculties which are concentrated in the production of it. To be sure, it is said, "When thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light;" but men do not interpret that passage right. They apply it to a single faculty, as the hunter squints along his single gun-barrel at one bird; but "singleness" means sincerity, honesty, directness, truthfulness, and has nothing to do with complexity as we are speaking of it.

One of the things which make men weak in life, one of the things which prevent their acting in volume, is that they are acting in special all the time.

To take an illustration which is familiar, out of my own profession, I hold that every sermon is strong or feeble by the number of faculties which go into the making of it. In order to have "beaten wheat," as it is called, "of the sanctuary," a man winnows out all personal feeling, and says, "That does not belong to the dignity of the pulpit;" and leaves out all those things in life which are happening every day, saying, "Common matters ought to have nothing to do with the highest themes;" and rejects the whole flow of sympathetic emotions, saying, "We ought to reduce this subject to its exact elements;" and then he says, "There must be no false lights allowed to shine from it," and shuts down the slide, and cuts off imagination; and then he says, "It is going to be delivered to dying souls, on Sunday, in the house of God, and there must be no indulgence in humor," and closes all the avenues through which that element might creep in; and then he says, "It must be the cleanest truth," and excludes all the feelings, and leaves nothing but bare intellection; and that intellection he reduces to

an abstraction; and when he has curtailed and limited it till it consists of one solitary beam of light, he preaches it, standing still, not letting himself out, softly; and that poor, starved, meagre line of abstract intellection he calls "a sermon!"

I should as soon invite my friends to my house to take a meal of fruit, and reduce the fruit to its chemical elements, throwing away the beautiful color, throwing away the tempting skin, throwing away the pulp, drying out the juice, reducing the whole to its last constituents, and give them a cup of that, and say, "Here is the very chemical quintessence of the peach!" They would taste it, and say with a wry face, "Well, I don't like peaches!"

With many a man it is the study of his week of preparation how to make a poor sermon, by getting himself, and all that can make it attractive or inspiring, *out*; as if the business of the preacher was anything but to take God's truth, and give it the form of his personality, and add to it all the power which comes from the sympathetic feelings!

Now, if, in preaching, a man has an opportunity to use humor or wit, or imagination, let him use it. If he has an opportunity to use causal reason, let him use that. If he has an opportunity to use perceptive reason, let him use that. If he has the power to reason logically or analytically, let him use that. Let him preach in the way that seems most natural to him. And if there come up social feelings, and sympathetic feelings, or any other feelings which tend to draw him nearer to his hearers, and them nearer to him, let them have free scope, instead of winnowing them out so that there shall be nothing left but artificial, periphrastic, literary language which Johnson or Addison might have understood, but which common folks do not understand. After men have laid aside all that language which is used in familiar conversation at the table or by the fireside, and drained their words as far as possible of blood, and dessicated their thoughts most effectually, they give them to their congregations, as the "beaten wheat of the sanctuary."

Now, I say that the more faculties there are working in a man, the better. Let anger work in its place; indignation in its place; fear in its place; hope in its place; love in its place; sympathy in its place; repulsion in its place; imagination in its place; all those elements which give force and kindness to the mind in their places. The highest condition of the mind is that in which all the pipes in this multiform organ are uttering their appropriate sounds in the proper way. Every man is making the best use of himself when the multiplicity of faculties with which he has been endowed are acting normally and rightly in any direction.

So that, when men analyze their motives, and undertake to reduce to single motives the whole play of the mind, with all its multitudinous elements, the process is irreligious. God has been many thousands of years in making men, and many men spend most of their time in spitting on what God has made; as if the thing that is divine and normal, and is a constituent element of the mind, could, with impunity, on any plea, be derided, or despised, or cast out, or lightly esteemed!

Fourthly, moral character is to be determined by primary and regnant motives, and not simply by auxiliary ones.

This leads me to say that on the examination of one's self it will almost invariably be found that there is a prime motive, or a prime faculty, which acts, and gives direction to the action, and that the other faculties which act in combination with it are simply auxiliary, and hold it on. During the time of deliberation one feeling may be strong, and may point out a given course, and others may quarrel with it till the thing is settled; but when the purpose is once formed, and the man begins to act, there is a primary faculty, or group of faculties, which shapes or marks out the main purpose, and all the other faculties come in as auxiliary, and help on that main purpose.

For instance, a man says, "I am determined that next year I will give twenty thousand dollars to the endowment of a school in my native village." Having settled the pro's and con's, he begins to act in that direction. He goes to work to set apart the twenty-thousand dollars which he has made up his mind to give. But while he is doing it, Selfishness tries to beat him down, and says, "Do not give quite so much: fifteen thousand is enough to give." But the man says, "No, I will give twenty thousand." Then Caution comes in, and says, "How do you know but you are taking bread out of your children's mouths! Had you not better, while you are living, invest your money so that they will have the benefit of it after you are gone?" "No," he says, "I am going to give twenty thousand dollars; that is settled: now hold your peace down there!" And they do hold their peace.

He is a very conscientious man; and after the thing is done he begins to think about how he came to do it; and he says to himself: "What motives did I act from?" He has been reading this chapter in the Bible, and he says, "Did I think of God's glory when I determined to do it? I do not remember that I did? Do not I know that I take a great deal of pleasure in the thought that my neighbors know that I did it, and are praising me? Is there not in my feeling an element of self-praise? I am afraid there is. Do I

not know that this act will give me a great deal of credit in the street, and that men will rather look up to me, and that it will be a help to me in various ways? I think I do. I am sure I see traces of selfishness and self-seeking in the course which I have taken." And so the man torments himself in every way. Pride says to him, "I can point out to you that I had some share in that deed;" and Hope says, "That is not all glorifying God: there is hope of reward in it;" and the different auxiliary faculties say, "I have a part in that." And so they have. Everything that is in you ought to have a share in it. There is not a great and worthy act which a man resolves to do from the noblest side, and highest part of his nature, that everything, from top to bottom of his head, or from center to circumference of his being, ought not to say, "Hallelujah!" Every feeling—benevolence, hope, fear, love, sympathy, pride, acquisitiveness—ought to worship a good act, a right intention; and the mere fact that you have these corroborating feelings, so far from invalidating your conduct, proves that your mind is acting normally, and in power, as God meant that it should act.

I illustrate this to show that in normal actions it is generally a faculty, or a group of faculties, that moves first; and that if the mind be free and right the rest of the faculties co-ordinate with the primary ones, and help them on, giving power, variety and strength to what they do. So that the mere presence of collateral feelings, or incidental motives, does not invalidate the primary ones, but corroborates them, and makes them better.

Thus, a man says to himself, "I have made up my mind to join the church; but I do not know as I am fit to do it. I do not know as I am sincere in wishing to do it." What is the matter? "Well, I know that nothing in the world would please my wife so much as my joining the church; and I have thought, perhaps it was to please her that I was going to join it. Besides, I know that when my mother hears that I have joined the church nothing outside the trumpet of heaven would please her so much. I am afraid that it may be my desire to please them that has led me to take this step." Well, it is right that you should inquire and see whether these are the prime feelings; but if you say, "I have taken a look over life, and I perceive that I am passing through my years, and I see that the time is going fast with me, and that if ever I am to change and get a hold on heaven I must do it soon, and I had better begin now, and I am determined to obey my Master according to the best of my ability," there is a noble motive, and that should be the sovereign motive; and if then, when that is settled, you think that your

wife and your mother will be rejoiced, and that everybody who loves you will be made happy, this collateral motive will be a help to the other. And if there comes in the reflection, afterwards, "I have been a poor shack, out of pocket; and if I join the church very likely I shall do a better business," that will do no harm. Take courage from that thought. You ought to do a better business when you become a better man. If the only motive, or the strongest one were that of the till, it would be a different thing; but if your conversion was genuine, and your desire and determination to live a Christian life is the primary one, then these social motives and considerations of profit will be an advantage to you rather than a hindrance. Thoughts of personal interest are not wrong under such circumstances. Godliness is profitable for this world and for that which is to come; only see that your *chief* motive is to glorify God. When you come to explore your mind, make sure that your purpose is right in this respect, and then do not be afraid of other feelings, whether they act singly or in groups, clear down to the bottom. You have a right to the whole of yourself. You have a right to help yourself by all of your faculties.

Having given this idea of motive as being a faculty, or a group of faculties; and having considered the relative excellence of motives, as high or low, and as primary and auxiliary, I am prepared, by a few words of application, I hope, to throw light upon some questions which have arisen in the minds of many persons who have not taken the comfort in their religious life which they might if they had been better informed as to their duty.

On the one side, let me say, is the danger of carelessness, and of indifference to all motives. This can scarcely be too much reprobated. Men ought to want to do the best things from the best motives. That is, men ought to want to do the best things with their noblest faculties. It is better to do a right thing from the poorest motive than not at all.

There has been a fire in Boston by which thousands of people have been thrown out of work. A shrewd man says, "Now I am going to send ten thousand dollars to the fund for the relief of those unfortunate people. I have been waiting for an opportunity to get my name before the public, and after so long a time this one has presented itself; and I am going to improve it. Won't the sending that money be a good advertisement for me? I will make more than that in one year out of my business." There is calculation here which the man makes with his avarice; and you expect me to say it is mean. Well, there is another man who has made calculation with his avarice. He says, "I won't send a penny."

Which is the meaner? I say that it is a very poor and low way of acting for a man to do a great generosity from a great selfishness; but it is better to do a generous thing from selfishness than not to do it all. It is not good, it is not praiseworthy; but it certainly is far better than to leave the thing undone.

Another man says within himself, "Everybody in society is going to give money for this object, and I am expected by my friends to stand up with them; I think it is right in times of personal trouble for men to stand by each other; and I will give my proportion." His motive is a little higher than that of the other man, but it is not very high. He acts from a sense of responsibility. He has a certain sympathy with the ideas of the circle in which he moves, and that is about all. The act in him is not noble; but it is far better that he should relieve the sufferings of his fellow men with his ten thousand dollars from the mere feeling of pride of character, than that he should not do it all.

Another man says, "I know there are a great many suffering from the effects of that fire, and I cannot help feeling for them; I do not feel justified in withholding my assistance from them; I am going to give them ten thousand dollars."

Now we begin to come to the real man. Now we begin to hear the ring of the divine nature in man. It is compassion that he feels.

But there is something higher than that. A man has just got together ten thousand dollars with which he was going to build a house for his daughter—his only beloved child—whose marriage is approaching. This object is dear to his thought. But something from within whispers to him, and says, "Those poor creatures are in great need, and you ought to help them." "But," he says, "if I do this, I must take it right out of my own kindred; and I will, God help me! They can wait, but these sufferers cannot."

That is noble; and yet there is something still better—the noblest of all. I will give you a case that I think surpasses that.

The Committee that meets at the Park Street Church, in Boston, sit every day, and hear applications from the poor who have been thrown out of work. There was one establishment in which were employed some nine hundred sewing girls. The lady superintendent who had charge of them all came every day to the rooms, and stood there to authenticate their various cases, to identify them, and to see that they had help. Day after day, day after day, day after day she was at her post, till one day, after nearly a week had passed, the thought occurred to one of the ladies to say to her, "You have been serving everybody else: possibly you may need

some help." It was ascertained that she had given the little that she had, and all her time; that she had sent her limited store to others, and kept none for herself; that she had fed everybody's mouth but her own; that she had seen that all had their rents paid but herself; and that she was on the verge of starving. Here she stood, on the very edge of misery, ministering, all the time, with all her power, to others. This is a case in which, if Jesus had passed by, he would have said of her, as he said of the widow who gave her two mites, "Verily she hath cast in more than all the others."

But I say that it is better for a person to do a right thing even from a low motive, than not to do it at all. Doing right is right; but doing right may be right meanly or gloriously.

On one side, therefore, we ought to be careful about our motives, and seek to act from high ones; but on the other side we ought not to be morbid and over-cautious in such a way as to take all satisfaction from human conduct. It does not take a long run of this sort of thing to deteriorate morality. If you make the condition of right living onerous, the great mass of mankind will be discouraged. It may be that you will make out of every hundred two or three heroes, yet all the rest will be, not heroes, but the opposite.

I now and then speak of Calvinism in terms of censure. You sometimes think, as I give prominence to one side, that I disesteem the other side. You are apt to suppose, when I speak in commendation of elements in which Calvinistic theology is lacking, that I have no regard for that theology. It has many good features, and has accomplished much that is praiseworthy; and I do not condemn it altogether when I sit in judgment upon some of its elements; but I say, as I have often said, that its general effect is to build up the strong, and make them stronger, and to discourage the weak, and make them weaker. That is not the spirit of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and I call Calvinism to account on this ground. I say that any system, no matter how much good it does, which discourages the mass of mankind, cannot be right. I say that any casuistry or any teaching which perplexes men, and takes away the motive to right doing which they have, and leads them to give up the endeavor to live right, cannot but be wrong. You cannot have a right system, you cannot have a system which is in accordance with the spirit of Jesus, unless it be a system which encourages every one, from the lowest to the highest, to live better. A system to be in the highest degree effectual must be so simple that the weak can understand it. It must be such that a wayfaring man though a fool shall not err therein.

If you say to a man, "You have held up before you an ideal of Christian duty, and you must live up to that ideal; you must act from the highest motives—for if those motives are adulterated by lower ones, they go for nothing," you screw the man up till he is like a violin-string that goes squealing higher and higher, until by and by it snaps, and no longer has any power. There are thousands and thousands of men who began honestly to live a Christian life, but on whom were put tests, until they were screwed so high that the feeling in them snapped; and now they are in despair; and they say, "There is no use of my trying any longer. I must take what I can get, and let everything else go."

This kind of scrutiny of motives, with a wrong philosophy, intensely carried forward, may do for here and there a poetic nature, or philosophic nature; it may do for strong, broad men, who have inherited the consciences of ten generations; it may do for geniuses of moral sense; it may make these greater and stronger; but it will not do for children and weak people. They perish under a system which is made to feed the strong. The Gospel must feed the weak, and then go up and feed the strong.

I remark again, that there is great feebleness, and a great want of generous momentum in the Christian life, which comes from the consciousness of one's self. My own impression is that there are two kinds of egotism—one that comes from thinking about one's self, and one that comes from forgetting one's self. Paul was a remarkable example of egotism; but when he spoke of himself, it was not "I," but "Christ that lives in me." He was so absolutely absorbed in another that he had no particular sense of his own identity.

Now, any course of self-examination is mischievous that puts a man all the time upon thinking of himself, and upon a mean, mousing, rankling thinking of himself at that. Any course of self-examination is pernicious under which a man is continually asking himself, "Am I going right now?"—under which a man says, for instance, at ten o'clock, "Well, I have gone right all day so far, but at twelve says, "Have I had the glory of God before me up to this time? Have I been acting from such and such motives?" This sort of introversion is fundamentally immoral. It is immoral morality. You are not to make for yourself a nest, and sit and brood over your possible conduct. You are to take your direction, and be sure it is right, and then make a fire, and put on steam, and go ahead, and trust yourself on the way.

I should like to know what kind of children I would have if I never let them go out of my sight, as men never do their motives,

and if I said to them, every time they stirred to go anywhere, "What are you going there for?" and insisted upon their giving account of all they did, and stopped them, and interfered with them every hour and every minute? They would be goody-good till they were about seventeen, and devil-devil after that!

Household government is to teach the child how to take care of himself; but he will not learn how to take care of himself if he is done up in brown paper, and tied with a string! If a child is to be anything, he must be trusted, and allowed to make mistakes. The world was made to make mistakes in. The place where they do not make mistakes is some way distant!

If you treat a man as a man, he will act like a man. If you treat him as a dishonest man, or a treacherous man, you will be likely to get back the feeling which you reflect upon him. So, if you are all the time suspecting that you are selfish, you will be apt to be selfish. If you are continually stopping your faculties, as you go through your round of duties, saying to them, "Show your passport," what rush can there be to your life?

Suppose John Zundel should stop to explain every chord that he played, and should say to me at every turn, "Now, hark! here comes the transition?" I should have the explanations, I should have a lecture upon music; but I should get no music.

Men, instead of letting their hearts, inspired of God, ring out that which is in them, are perpetually stopping them, and exhibiting them before themselves, and analyzing them; but there can be no momentum, none of that breadth and strength and largeness which a man should have, under such circumstances. You must trust yourself.

"But suppose I go wrong?" Well, go wrong then. It is better that you should go wrong, part of the time, trusting yourself, than that, distrusting yourself, you should go wrong all the time. You must have strength of purpose. You must have *lunge*! You must start out in the morning meaning to do right, seeing that you are right, armed for the right, and taking aim in the right direction; you must have aspiration, call on God, forget yourself, and then go forward into life; and if at noontide or at eventide, there comes a moment for reflection or meditation, do as the shipmaster does—take an observation, see how you hold on your course, get your direction again, and do the best you can all the way through.

If you have gone through a line of action, I remark once more, get as much comfort out of it as you can. God meant joy to be nutriment. Jesus meant that his disciples should have peace and

joy. They were to have sorrow, to be sure; but sorrow is an apple-tree that gives apples which when ripe are not sour. Many afflictions are like orange-trees that are full of thorns, but on which, here and there, is fruit that is filled with sweetness. We must bear and endure; and while in bearing and enduring there is suffering, there is also some enjoyment.

Do not be afraid of enjoying yourself. Avoid sordid joy, and indiscriminating peace and rest; but mean the best things, aim at them, do as well as you can under the circumstances, and then, for heaven's sake, take some comfort.

But no, the dear conscientious woman, who has got up early and sat up late, and worked to the extent of her power, goes and sits down and looks into the fireplace, and says, "I am afraid I have not acted from pure motives. I do not think I have done as I ought to;" and in five minutes she picks to pieces the work of the day. And that is her thank-offering to God! He does not thank you for any such miserable whining as that, any more than I should my children if they did the same thing. If I am satisfied that my children in the main mean right, cannot I overlook their shortcomings? Is it not a part of my life to do it?

We are not serving a hard master: we are serving a Master who is more lenient and gentle toward us than over-conscientious persons are toward themselves. You are binding on yourselves and others burdens which are too heavy to be borne. Many of you make your life such a bondage, and task, and chide yourselves so, that men get no encouragement from you in living a life of honesty, and truth, and humility, and virtue; and, when they look upon you, do not want to glorify God, but say, "I would not be such a man." You ought to live such a life of aspiration and integrity that men, seeing you, shall want to follow your example. You can then be generous with your mistakes and faults as God is generous with your sins. And men, seeing you thus giving power to life, will be stimulated to greater exertions in the same direction.

Do not expect that in this mortal state you will be other than imperfect. Expect that every day you will be more or less imperfect—as certainly you will be. Live trusting the grace of God; sing, and be glad; and see to it, always, that the upper part works strongest and first, and that the bottom is kept under, as a servant. Blessed be those servants that are servants, and cursed be those servants that are masters. Let reason, the moral sentiments, all generous impulses, have play and power, and let those lower feelings that want to help follow after.

Do not be a hard master with yourself. Serve Christ; serve him cheerfully and joyfully; and he will serve you royally, with an eternal salvation.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

IF only they could come to thee, O God, who could wear a pure robe, and carry a heart without stain, who then should draw near to thee? Thou callest the weak to come, filled with infirmity. Thou callest the sinful, who are conscious of their transgression, to thee. Thou callest unto thee those who are infirm of purpose, vacillating from day to day, and falling back from their best resolve. It is a straight and a steep way that men are called to walk. And thou knowest—for thy feet have trod it—the way of life. Thou hast been tempted in all points like as we are; and thou proclaimest thyself a merciful high-priest touched with the feeling of our infirmity; as, long before, thou hadst said, Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.

We draw near to thee in thy great benignity, in thy great mercy and grace, O Lord, to uncover that which before thee is always uncovered. We draw near to say, Search us, and understand our most secret thought. Not by our wisdom, but by thine own insight and wisdom, help us, and do for us that which is best. We trust ourselves in the hand of supreme Love. We believe that in love is all needed justice. We believe that all discriminating truth, all that is necessary for the upbuilding of men in righteousness, is comprehended therein. We believe that love is the heart of God, and the treasure-house of the universe; and that out of the great realm of divine love come forth life, and all the succor that life needs, and all the inspirations of men, yea, and their chastisements. *Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.*

We rejoice that we may draw near to such an One, from whom we learned how to be piteous; from whom we learned mercy; from whom, as scholars, we learned how to forgive.

O Lord, our God, we thank thee that, in the greatness of thy nature, thou dost not forget us. We are in supreme selfishness walking through life, and disdaining everything that is not of us or like us. We tread upon the worm remorselessly. We brush away the insect because it is not human. We care little for animals. Though they be sentient, and though they have their own sphere, they are little to us except to promote our happiness. We think nothing of the vast fellowship around us and beneath us, and stand solely in the sovereignty of our position.

Thou, O Lord, dost not so stand. All thy creatures are dear to thee. They are fed and sustained by thee. Though they toil not, and do not spin, yet God supplieth them. Those eternal laws by which the universe is upheld, and by which all its abundance is produced, are but the expressions of thy thought and the manifestations of thy power, all-ministering and all-sustaining. And we beseech of thee that we may feel that in the hands of such a God—a God so full of ministrations of mercy; a God whose aims are upward and toward perfection—we are safe. Grant, O God, that we may seek perfection in the same way that thou wouldst have us perfect. Grant that we may be faithful disciples of Him who maketh his sun to rise

on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust, and saith to us, Be ye in this way perfect.

And now, Lord, we pray that thy blessing may rest severally upon all who are gathered together in thy presence; upon all those who sit in darkness of soul, and are unconsolated, or unconsolable. Be their Comforter. Thou canst reach the uttermost despair. Thou canst relieve that distress on which no light of this world can be made to shine.

We commend to thee all who are bereaved; all who are watching in doubt and fear for those who are much beloved; all those hearts that are pained or overburdened in behalf of their children or friends. We draw near to thee, and, with the full fervor of love, beseech of thee for every one, in all the history and mystery of life. Nothing is concealed from thee, and thou hast infinite pity and infinite succor; and may all that are in trouble draw near to thee, and find covert beneath thy wings.

Grant thy blessing, we beseech of thee, to rest upon those who are burdened more than they can bear with trouble and care in life. Have compassion on all those who have seen their cherished expectations dashed to the ground in a moment. Remember those who yesterday were strong and hopeful, but who to-day are overthrown and in ruins. We beseech of thee to teach them to put their treasure higher than fire and water, or any earthly power, can reach. Grant, we beseech of thee, that none of them may yield to despair. May they be saved by hope, and lifted up above present trouble, and be strengthened again, to-morrow, to make battle for that which is right and good. We pray that thou wilt grant that their faith and their courage may not fail them. Grant that they may stand, not in their own strength, but in the strength of God, which shall make their strength victorious.

We pray for all those who remember friends afar off. Some are praying for their dear ones upon the sea. Be with them upon the sea, thou that didst walk upon the water, and in the storm didst guide it. Hast thou forgotten thy power upon the sea?

Remember those who are in distant lands, in the variety of their circumstances. Be gracious unto them.

Be with those who are strangers among us, and whose whole households, all of whose friends, are afar off. Wilt thou grant that to-day all that are homo-sick and heart-sick may be brought so near to thee and to the power of divine love, that they shall be comforted and strengthened in the ways of life.

Look in compassion upon the outcast, and teach us more and more to look upon them in compassion. And may we not become selfish, nor arrogant, nor self-conceited, nor hard-hearted by our familiarity with sin. We pray that our hearts may still be tempered with gentleness, and sympathy, and love.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt remember the work of knowledge. May those in our midst who are engaged in instructing the young be guided of God. May they not work in the anticipation of reward; and yet, may they be rewarded as they go on day by day.

Prepare us for the end of life here, and prepare us for that other life which awaits us beyond this world. And grant unto us the hope of believing that when this life is over, we shall begin our life again in a higher sphere, under a better ministration, and with nobler joy, thou thyself being our Leader, in thine own presence, no more speaking to us afar off through signs, and symbols, and laws, but communing with us face to face, we seeing thee as thou art, and loving like unto thee.

And we will give the praise of our salvation to the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thy blessing may rest upon the word of truth spoken. May it sink into the heart as seed that falls into good ground. As seed, never so small, dropped into the soil, springs up, and brings forth flowers and fruit, so may these words, to which we have listened, come forth, and bear both flowers and fruits to the honor of thy name, and to the comfort of our own souls. O thou great Lover, thy word is filled with tokens of thy benevolence and bounty. O thou tender Father, let us not tremble as if thou wert an unfeeling tyrant. O thou comforting God, give us consolation in our sorrow. O thou most merciful Being, give us peace in our infirmities, and give us encouragement in our mistakes and failures. Thou dost pity: help us also to pity, and so to be like unto thee. And at last bring us, through experiment, and suffering, and trial, to that sphere where we shall enter upon a higher and nobler life, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

THANKSGIVING SERMON.

WAR AND PEACE.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."—ISA. II., 3, 4.

Does it not seem strange to you, when you look back upon the long line of nations, civilized or semi-civilized, and read their literature, their poetry, and their philosophies, and see on every side only a spirit of rivalry and of military glory,—does it not, then, seem strange that the one sweet voice that is lifted up like a chant or a hymn, through all the ages, was the voice of the old Hebrew people? They were themselves not unwarlike; they were a people of fierce passions, whom it required ages to discipline; and yet their prophets, instead of being the leaders of the people to believe that war was the favorite pastime of the gods, and that it was the mark of honor among men to be eminent in military skill and prowess, taught that when God should rule, the earth would be at peace; and that when the ways of God should be observed, and the law should go forth from Zion, it would be then the time when all people should turn from military occupations, and bestow themselves upon remunerative industrial and civil pursuits.

This passage which I have read is the exultant prediction that a day shall come to pass when the nations shall be governed by God's will. That is, national laws and national policies shall yet be controlled, not by the lowest passions of mankind as largely as hitherto, but by the highest moral sentiments. A day is coming

when public sentiment shall demand that public men shall be nobler morally; when all public laws shall be couched and framed in the highest moral interest of the whole; and when the policy of nations shall conform to the beneficent policy of Divine providence. When that shall take place, there will be universal peace; and this peace will turn the resources of nations into wealth-producing channels.

From the very terms that are employed here, we may say that this will be done, when it is done, by the laborers of the world—by the artisans and by the husbandmen. For, when it is declared that “they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,” it is *the people* that shall do it. When it is declared that their spears shall be beaten into pruninghooks, it is the spears of *the people* of which the writer speaks. “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

To-day, the supreme business of nations in European Christendom is teaching the whole people how to war; but when the equity of the Gospel shall come, as it is declared that it shall come, that whole system of military instruction shall be done away. All the resources that are swallowed up now in military affairs shall be turned toward the civilization, the education and the comfort of the people; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and poverty shall be well-nigh unknown, and God shall reign from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, and fill the earth with his glory.

The greatest obstruction, to-day, to the progress of civilization and of religion, applied to human affairs, is in the unnatural potency of the war-making faculties of the human mind.

Here, then, are the facts. The highest condition of civilization will be one in which the war-spirit shall be extinguished, and reason and the moral sentiments shall invoke and maintain their place.

Secondly, all this work requires the co-operation of the great laboring class of the community. In the lower stage of mankind, where men seem to be encouraging, from their animal condition, the law of the animal kingdom—namely, force, and its near allies, craft and cunning—there physical force, supplemented by so much intelligence only as shall make it most effectual, is universal; and in this lower stage of human existence, we call men savages. The savage lives by force. If there is anything else, it is only so much mind as is necessary to make cunning, in addition to force. But the line of development is directly away from physical force toward social, moral and intellectual force. The line of development is

therefore towards the application of these higher elements. You can never extinguish physical force, nor those great appetites and passions by which it is set in motion; but the line of development will require that this force shall be more and more sparingly employed upon men, and that it shall be more and more reserved and concentrated upon physical things.

I do not believe the time has come, or nearly come, in which governments can exist without armed force. I do not believe that municipal bodies can exist without police force—which is only another form of armed force; I do not believe that even in the rearing of the household the time has come in which you can set at naught, utterly, the use of physical force; but I say that the necessity for it is evidence of the fact that we have the lingering remain, of savageism in us. Physical force is indispensable. There is as yet no other element employed by men by which they can succeed. In proportion as families, and cities, and nations are impoverished in social or moral force, they must fall back on something; and rather than fall into the gulf of ungoverning anarchy, they must apply physical force; but the less there is of it, in any nation on any part of the globe, so that all the great economies of society can be carried on, the further removed are men from barbarism, and the nearer have they approached the ideal of Christian civilization.

The globe, however, is not to be without appetite and passion, nor without those intense physical energies which are inspired by them. It does not follow, because we do not any longer make war upon each other, that the armed hand will go out of use. No, swords are not to be thrown away; they are to be beaten into pruninghooks. The spear is not to be wasted; it is to be made into an instrument of industry. So the crushing power, the organized physical force, that men now form into armies, and by which they sweep fellow nations, is to be directed against nature—against the soil, against the rock, against metal. We are to pierce mountains; we are to tunnel hills; we are to cut ways for industry; we are to rear up fleets; and we are to battle storms. We are to be warriors still, but warriors for peace; warriors against the forces of nature that resist us, until we subdue the nations to the blessed condition of industry, as well as social and civil conquest. And the ratio of civilization will be found to be just in proportion to the difference that exists between the use of physical force for managing men, and the use of physical force for controlling nature.

The higher instincts, then, when civilized, become engineers'

forces, and not military forces. There are fields in them for force-inspiring energies; and as they find useful application, less and less will they be employed as against men.

The time has come, or at least is now near, when there shall be an organization of nations for the peace of the world. We have an organization in every town or village in this land by which no one man is allowed to let loose his passions as he pleases. The good of every citizen in the town requires that the lawless forces of men shall be regulated. The law undertakes to do for men what in a savage or barbarous condition they undertake to do for themselves. But the time is coming when nations shall organize for the same purposes that villages and towns do now, and when it shall be as unlawful for a nation to let loose its avaricious and vindictive desires in the community of nations, without their leave, as it is for a man to let loose his personal passions in the midst of civilized men, without law, and without the leave of a magistrate.

We are educating, step by step, in that direction. For the last half century there has been, perhaps, a not very visible, but nevertheless a very real and distinct, approach toward a higher and a better mode of settling national disputes than by war. That arbitration which had many illustrations before the great and noble instance which occupied so recently the thought of the civilized world, on the whole tends to development and to growth; but it must be followed by others. There must be a code of international law, covering more perfectly the great issues likely to come up. Above all, there must be overhanging public sentiment, an educated conscience, and an educated judgment of that source from which all real power in a nation comes—namely, the common people. And I shall address to that intent, and in that direction, the residue of my remarks this morning. I shall speak on the subject of War and Peace; and I shall discuss it from the standpoint of the great industrial classes in the community.

I doubt whether very much will ever be accomplished, or if accomplished will ever be made efficient in practice, until the great mass of laboring men through Christendom have been educated to hate war. I think there is a tendency already beginning to show itself in that respect; light is dawning; but hitherto the masses of men have, on the whole, been in favor of anything that should carry nations into war. War has, until within a comparatively recent period, almost always been popular with the bulk of the nations. To be sure, after long continued wars, when everything has been wasted, and men have been reduced to the extremest and direst poverty and trouble, there has risen up a hatred of war; but

it has lasted only long enough to grow a few trees to cover the graves of the slain, and to raise up a new generation of children. Then the sound of the trumpet has been the sweetest sound that men could hear, and war their pastime again. And so wave after wave of war has rolled across the world.

But I think the time is coming when men are going to make a stand, from which they are not going to retreat; and that from that point, step by step, onward and upward, we are going to gain, at last, ascendancy over one of the direst evils that ever afflicted mankind.

In our time, the right thought is with the inspired few—with the educated; but the inspired few are generally prophets without a following. Ordinarily, men who point out right ways do not live to see the accomplishment, practically, of that which they teach theoretically. They are like John the Baptist, who died before Christ completed or even began his ministry. They are the voice of men crying in the wilderness, and saying, “*Prepare ye the way; make the paths straight.*” The source of thought is the intelligence of the inspired few; but not so the source of power, by which things become omnipotent. That power resides in the mass of the people. And, however many wise thoughts, or treatises, or laws you may have on the subject of war, and however much it may be the desire of rulers, or ministers of justice, or good men, to have peace, you never will be able to control this monster until you have that power which means a real educated conviction of the common people on your side. If they mean war, you cannot stop it. If they mean peace, you cannot inflame it.

There must, therefore, be diffused among them the knowledge that war strengthens the enemies of the common people; that it impoverishes the laborer; and that it perverts that development and enterprise which is now the growing aspiration of the laboring classes.

Do you suppose that I am a Communist when I say that I sympathize with the Communists—as I do? Do you suppose I am an International because I say that I sympathize with the Internationals—as I do? It is not because they are Communists; it is not because they are Internationals; it is not because I think their creed to be wise, or tenable in philosophy. On the other hand, I regard their creed to be heretical, and much that belongs to them to be atrocious and detestable. But this I say: that the masses of laborers, who have been blind as bats, and whose hands have been made weak, are beginning to feel for each other, and to say, “Can we not by combination find some way by which to make our bur-

dens less, and break the yokes from off our necks?" Are they in their ignorance to be cast out of sympathy and universal care because as yet they do not know? And how shall they learn in their bondage? How should they have learned in the weary pilgrimage which they have gone through thus far in the desert? Who has been their teacher? Have schools been so common in Europe that all the peasantry have had a chance to become informed? Has education been on so broad a scale that they are made familiar with political wisdom? And, betrayed by their priesthood; ground down by their rulers, from generation to generation; with no outlets and no opportunities; with little comfort and much suffering; and with the very future itself darkened by those to whom they look for instruction and religion, and who say that men who wail through life are to wail hereafter forever, shall these masses of men, feeling at last the inspiration that belongs to our age and our time, and going forth and groping for something better—shall they be held to as exact an account as you, or as men who are members of academies of science, or those who fill legislative halls? I am sorry for them. I am not in sympathy with their theories. I think them to be wholly mistaken theories, that they themselves will by and by cast away. Laboring men, feeling an aspiration for something higher, have cried, holding up their hands toward the east, and uttering a wail like that of the old Hebrews, "How long, O Lord! how long?" while hundreds of years have gone thundering with war past them. And I pray for the time to come when the great mass of the common people who now are misrepresenting themselves in this, that and the other abortive effort, shall have better leaders, a better philosophy, and better success in the slow conflict which they are attempting to wage with those elements in society which have oppressed them, and do still oppress them.

When, then, I behold this vast bulk of unorganized men, conscious of wrong, and smarting under it, and attracted by every "Lo here!" and "Lo there!" and rushing after new theories, as the old Jews did at the Advent, and running after every man who calls himself anointed—when I look upon them, and see their distress, I fain would say to them, "There is a Jesus coming; there is an Advent not far off; there is justice, there is love and there is triumph for you!" I fain would make religion say, what it never has said, to the great mass of the peasantry in Europe—"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

In the first place, there must be more intelligence diffused among them. The education of the common people ought to be the special enthusiasm of our age. It is fundamental. It is abso-

lutely necessary. It ought not to be permitted that any child that is born should grow up unintelligent or uneducated. Where knowledge is a virtue, there ignorance is a crime; and I hold that every government, to say nothing about churches and parishes, is bound, not simply to promote education, but to enforce education upon every child that comes into the world. You ought to put your ballot-box behind your school-house, and every child that votes should go through the school-house to vote. It ought to be made as obligatory on a man to be intelligent, as to be a wise citizen in any other respect. We must begin with the thorough education of the whole mass of society.

A law of intelligence and skill, then, which is the actual law of nature, must be taught to men. For, if men are organizing industrial associations, guilds, communes, and various other bodies, to attempt to make all men equal, and to wring out of society a system which shall make it obligatory that all men shall be paid alike, and that all men shall be regarded alike, then they are going right straight back to Egypt again. It is a rebellion against Jehovah.

"Well, but," you say, "men are free." In fact? No, only in theory and right. Every man has a right to be free; but a quarter of the globe in reality are born not free. "All men are equal." How? In height? I think not. In girth? Hardly. In weight, avoirdupois? Notoriously not. Equal, then, how? In thought power? Certainly not. In moral power? Certainly not. In wealth-producing power? No, certainly not. There are infinite variations among men in these regards. In what respect, then, are men equal? In no other respect than this: that before the law neither is inferior to the other. The law is bound to regard a right just as right in one class of society as in another. Right is no righter at the top than it is at the bottom, and wrong is no wronger at the bottom than at the top, in the eyes of the law. The laws recognize all men alike, and ought to be administered without partiality. In Europe it used to be so that if a peasant committed murder, he was punished four times as severely as a noble: but the law says, "Men are equal in that respect. If a peasant commits a crime he is no more a criminal than a noble who commits a crime." Men are equal before the law in respect to justice; but the idea that there is any such thing as dynamic equality is the wildest hallucination that ever disturbed the brain of man. Men are not all free, as a fact, though they ought to be. Neither are they equal in power. And any theory of society which undertakes to proceed upon an equality and fraternity in all affairs among men, so that the dull hand shall be re-

garded as no less valuable than the thinking and skillful hand, and so that the non-earning man shall stand as high as the earning man, thus abolishing all moral distinctions, and distinctions of skill, and distinctions of intelligence, between man and man, will be a failure. It is no less preposterous, and no less absolutely against the laws of nature, than the fantasy and folly of that gardener who raises oaks and huckleberry bushes side by side, and undertakes to exalt the huckleberry bushes, and make it appear that they are larger than the oaks.

Men must be taught to observe. They will be, by and by; but let there first be intelligence; and then, out of intelligence will come a more just conception of the nature of man, of the organization of men in society, and of their relative forces in industry. There must be a determination among the common people to organize themselves so that every man shall have his chance; so that every man shall assert and maintain his personal freedom; so that every man shall claim and secure his right to all that which belongs to the force he carries—so much and no more. There must also be a determination that war shall not rule industry; that it shall not be dynastic; and that if it is permitted at all, it shall be by the voice of the nation, and not by the voice of its rulers. In other words, the common people must be so instructed that they shall say, "If there is going to be war, we are to have our say first, and the rulers theirs afterwards."

I wish, now, therefore, not to argue the evils of war in general, nor to argue the wrongs of war in most cases, but to give some reasons why all who depend upon labor for support, and all who are seeking to build up for themselves and their children a home, should hate war, and study to prevent it.

First, all the laboring men of the Christian world have interests in common, as against those influences by which war has usually been made. In other words, the men who make the most use of war are the men who most oppress the common people. In resisting war, men resist their natural oppressors. Soldiers are from the common people; and in war they prey upon each other. When France goes to war against Germany, the artisans of Paris shoot down the artisans of Berlin. When Prussia goes to war against Austria, men who live by the shop and upon the soil, and who are natural sympathizers with each other against nobles and dynasties, weaken themselves and strengthen their oppressors by killing each other. All wars are conducted by the bone and muscle and enthusiasm of those classes of men who need sympathy for themselves, and need to be leagued with each other.

The vast armies which are drafted rest with the most weight upon the poor—for at length it is the ground that every building stands upon. You may put as many girders as you please under the roof; you may put as many columns as you please along under them; but you only transmit the bearing force; and when, at last, it stops, it rests upon the broad earth. You may make as many arrangements as you please between the crowned head and the peasant; but at last, the whole weight of taxation, the whole burden of society, comes down upon the shoulders of the poor and needy.

When men come to learn this, there will be a different feeling among the common people. It is true in Europe, that the war system involves the rich and the poor; but the rich, in most cases, can buy exemption from conscription, or, where they fail in that, can, with their wealth, by procuring substitutes, avoid actual service in the army. Single men, from nineteen to twenty-four years of age, are taken out of the great bulk of their citizens, just at the time of that formative period when industrial skill is taking its shape, and are required to learn the art of war and remain in the camp. Now, I say, although it seems as if it were very hard to take a professional young man whose father is a distinguished councilor in Berlin, and draft him into the army, and put him through the military drill, it is harder yet to take the young man whose father is a common laborer. There is great sympathy and consideration for the man of the upper class, but it is said of the peasant, the Suabian, "He owns little or nothing, and it cannot make much difference with him, so he ought to go." I say it is a great deal harder for the poor peasant to be put into the army than it is for the son of a great councilor or millionaire. If there is any one that can afford to have a dunce for a son, it is the rich man. If there is any one that can afford to have sons grow up in a manner which shall unfit them for taking care of themselves, it is the man who has property to take care of them with. And if there is any one who cannot afford to lose his opportunity in life, it is the man who has nothing. He is at the bottom; and if he is to hold himself up, it will require the development and use of everything that he has in him. If he is to work out a future for his household, he must have a chance to employ his time and thought, which are his only capital, in a way that shall bring about this result. Therefore, when a war of conscription brings the poor into the ranks, the weight comes on them more than upon the rich.

Consider what the mass of men are who are shut up in the armies of Europe. Of our own small army I shall speak by and by,

if I do not forget it. It is estimated (this estimate was made seven years ago, and the figures have been very much enlarged since that time) that there are five millions of armed men in the Christian lands of Europe. It is estimated that the regular armies number that. And if you count the reserves—that is to say, men who have been in the army, and have gone back one step, but are liable to be called out any hour, then there are five millions more to be added. So that there are ten millions of soldiers in Europe. And war never will take poor material. It always picks and gets the best. As we get the best timber for ships, so the best men are taken for armies. The near-sighted, the blind, the deaf, the cripples, can stay at home; but the round, the plump, the brawny, the strong, are taken for war. And in Christendom there are more than ten millions of men whose supreme business is war.

Look, for a moment, at the tables which have been published in Vienna. It is said that Russia has 862,000 men engaged in war. I do not mention the horses, the artillery, the cannon, and so on, but simply the men. The number in Russia has become much larger since. This table was prepared seven years ago. There are as many as 835,000 men drawn out from industrial occupations to stand in their war-shoes. Austria has 740,000 men clad in iron. The English armed force at home, throughout her provinces, and elsewhere, is 471,000 men. France has an army of more than 500,000 men. Besides, there are minor states in Europe which go to make up more than 5,000,000 men who belong to the regular standing armies of Europe.

Now, it is not merely that these men are being brought up, or arrayed against the interests of the common people, as substantially they are; but consider how much productive industry is withdrawn by withdrawing five millions of the very best men from that period of their life which is the best for productiveness. Consider, further, what is the enormous expense of supporting these men. It is four hundred million pounds sterling a year—over two thousand million dollars a year. And it must have been augmented by probably a third to a half since this estimate was made. Probably twenty-five hundred millions of dollars a year, by taxation, are gathered from the laboring classes of Europe, to keep from five to ten millions of men out of productive industry, to keep them in a state in which they should do violence to each other—that is, to the common laborers of Europe. From 83 to 90 per cent. of all the taxation in Christendom is expended in military matters.

Look at these facts. Do you believe there is any such thing as

religion in the world? Was there ever a Christ? Did the Orient dawn lighter, as, hanging in the east, angels sang, "Peace on earth, good will to men?" And now, for nearly two thousand years under Christian crowns and priestly mitres, there stand embattled in Europe nearly 10,000,000 men, and \$2,500,000,000 annually wrung out by taxation from the people. And of the sum total of all the money raised by taxation in Europe for the support of the governments, from 83 to 90 per cent. is paid for military purposes to-day. There are more than \$90 paid in Christendom for war to every \$1 that is paid for preaching and spreading the Gospel.

That is the state of things in the present day. Have men had their eyes open? Have they thought about this? Is it not something to be racketed in the shops, and discussed in the village debating societies? Is it not something for the anvil to ring out to the saw, and for the saw to speak of to the plane, and for the plane to talk to the sickle about? Should it not be understood by laborers everywhere that there is this infernal dynasty of cruelty and violence which will hold men down as long as it is permitted to exist?

There is another point respecting this question which is worthy of attention. In Russia there has been an excess of expenditure over income since 1832. In other words, so great an empire as Russia spends so much for war that she cannot possibly maintain the expenditure, and goes on from year to year with a deficit, increasing her financial burdens, and rolling over and over a national debt which she has no power to meet, and which sooner or later will be destructive to both the poor and the rich, like an avalanche, which, when it falls, sweeps down and buries everything in its way. In Austria the accumulated deficits from 1851 to 1856, amounted to 130,000,000 pounds sterling. France, before the last war, was sinking miserably and hopelessly into debt. Her indebtedness, in thirteen years, increased from 213,000,000 pounds sterling to 492,000,000 pounds sterling, the deficit during that period amounting to 279,000,000 pounds sterling. The Kingdom of Italy cannot meet its expenses. It is raising more and more men every year, every year is coming nearer and nearer to bankruptcy, and is staggering to its downfall. And yet, Italy, if it had no army to support, if it could live in peace, and turn all its resources into industrial channels, would become one of the compactest and strongest of States. The curse, to-day, of Germany, Austria, France and Italy, is, that they stand looking like so many lions over against one another, each piling up means of defence; each sucking the blood of industry; each robbing its poor to build

stronger forts, and supply them with more armaments; and each approaching nearer and nearer the verge of financial failure. And when ground, tormented, and taxed to the uttermost, the peasantry begin to heave, and break out into revolutions, and unite in secret societies, or otherwise, to relieve themselves from their grievous oppressions, holy men lift hands of horror, and wonder why God permits such wicked discontent to grow up among the common people! The world is rotten!

What have the wars of the last two hundred years gained for Europe that might not have been more certainly gained by the intelligence of the common people? Two nations will fight about a map. For that which is worth perhaps \$40,000,000, they will go to war; and when they have suffered the loss of 200,000 men and \$200,000,000, they settle the war, *but not the question*. That goes over for the next generation to play with again. There has hardly been a dispute that could not have been easily settled by the payment of a few million dollars. I do not believe in bribery; but I think nations might be willing to settle with money many and many a question about which they fight, involving a few feet of ground here, or a small strip of land there. But, oh! it is a question of honor! Honor? It is the devil's honor. It is the honor of passion. It is the honor of pride. It is the honor of combativeness. It is the honor of destructiveness. It is the honor of the dragon that lies coiled up in the base of every man's brain!

Do you know where men come from? Some come, I think, from crocodiles; some, I think, were lions; some, I think, were tigers or panthers; some, bears or wolves; some, sneaking foxes; some, snakes. I do not mean that it is literally so; but they act just as though they had come from that ancestry, and retained the essential traits of their ancestors!

Now, I do not take the ground that all defensive wars are wrong. I do not think they are. I do not believe that the use of physical force to maintain the great moral ends of justice, liberty and national life can yet be dispensed with. The time is coming when it can be dispensed with, but that time has not come yet. I agree with the most advanced men, that the ideal of Christianity is absolute peace; I believe that the ideal of Christianity is to suffer evil rather than inflict evil; but Christianity has not yet come to its ideal. You cannot bring communities up by the ears. You may say to the individual man, "You are bound to develop to the uttermost;" but he cannot develop thus all at once. Since God ordained that men and society should come up by growth, you cannot force them up. Growth, of necessity, requires time. The

ideal of Christianity is final and universal peace, and it is the duty of nations to dispense with physical force as fast and as far as possible; but you cannot dispense with it suddenly, and disband all armies and police organizations, and leave the world to think that there is no government. To do that would be to leave the world to brutality, and make the tyrant more tyrannical, and the lawless more lawless. Until society is stronger in the direction of the social, intellectual and moral elements, we must use an inferior instrument. We must use the hand till the head and the heart are right. Christianity is so large that we are to grow into it gradually; but as fast as possible nations should take hold of its principles.

I take the ground that the time has come when by suitable efforts the war spirit may be abated, and men in the main set against it. The time has come when the forces of nations may be so combined as to reduce the temptations of war. Nations can be so organized as to prevent any unruly member from going to war, as rightfully as municipal bodies in towns and villages can prevent any citizen from going into a fight at the expense of the peace of the whole community. The peace of the world, in other words, is not to be subject to the whim or caprice of any single nation, any more than the peace of a nation is to be subject to the whim or caprice of any man or body of men in it.

We have seen dueling go out of practice almost entirely. It has been thought that two men might go out and settle their differences by the use of deadly weapons; but that idea is fast going out of date. It is thought that two nations have a right to fight national duels to settle their difficulties; but this sort of dueling is just as wrong as the other, and just as really and as easily vincible. There should be, therefore, such steps taken as, for instance, the organization of a national congress, for enacting international law, and administering that law between nation and nation. At present the law of nations is crude, and a large part of the ground between nation and nation is not covered by national enactments. But we have come to a time when I think we might begin, at last, to form a national congress, that shall enact laws which shall be for the good of all nations, and by which all nations alike shall be bound. There are some international laws, which pertain more largely to commerce than to anything else; but I think the time has come for a more thorough work through the organization of a national congress. There must be a determination to so educate the whole people that the current of public sentiment will run in that direction. If the people remain ignorant on the subject, or indifferent to it, it will

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be in vain to undertake to institute and carry out this reform ; but if the people are instructed, and aroused to feel that their interests lie in peace, then "*Vox populi*" will be "*Vox Dei*"—a proverb which has been as little understood and as much abused as any proverb in the world. If by saying that the voice of the people is the voice of God, you mean that the people have the power to know a truth as God has power to know it, that is hideously false ; for the vast mass of the common people have almost no power to comprehend the truth. But when the truth is found out and made known to the great mass of the common people, and they accept it, and lift up their voice, and give it power, then the voice of the people is indeed the voice of a heaven full of gods. And we must get the power of the people to enforce the laws which may be enacted by an international congress.

On the church of God rests, primarily, this work. I do not undertake to say, I am far from saying, that a church should turn aside from its work of individual evangelization, of preaching the Gospel from man to man, in the society where it exists ; yet the church universal has a large sphere. It is bound to stand foremost in making reformatory laws, in tempering brutal penalties, and in infusing sympathy and love into men, instead of separating them by sharp theological prejudices. The church of God, as a representative of Christ, must go forth, not to preach will, nor even conscience, but a Gospel which shall employ that will and that conscience in the world as instruments by which to secure peace and harmony among nations, as well as individuals. God's church is hereafter to promote more widely and efficiently those institutions, and laws, and governments which shall diffuse through civil economy everywhere the essential spirit of humanity.

There is also a mission laid on America. This people has the power, by its example, of doing what no other nation on the earth can. Was it in vain that we were shut out by the seas from the evils of those heated questions which afflict Europe ? Was it in vain that, in the construction of this Government, that marvelous economy of national life was established, by which, from ocean to ocean, every State moves on every other State as if it were hinged to it, so that they are easily moveable, and are not easily fractured, and are able to maintain unity with all their diversity ? What if every State on this continent were a separate nation, and each had to have a standing army, and its aggressive or vengeful policy ? Do you not see that then our peace would be gone, and that our power, instead of being expended in pursuits of industry, would be wasted through contentions and

strifes? But God has been pleased to sweep out from our midst the abomination of slavery, and to enable us to maintain that unity of national life which gives us no excuse for supporting large armies and navies. Three thousand miles, and five thousand miles, from our shores, are our nearest enemies, and the ocean is cool, and many a passion has time to subside before a voyage can be made over the sea. Oh! that kings were as seasick as I am, and always had to cross the ocean before they went to war!

Is it, I ask again, in vain that we are thus set apart? Is it in vain, and simply for our own good, that we have been enabled to maintain such strange prosperity? Is it in vain that all the nations of Europe stand on tiptoe looking over upon the liberty of the common people here? Is it in vain that in every recess of their mountains, that in every canton, or town, or shire, the common school system of America is well known, and that it is understood that all our children—those of the poor as well as those of the rich—are educated, and that all of them become voters, and that the land belongs to the people who dwell upon it, and that they are almost untaxed? Is it in vain that the peasantry of less fortunate nations behold the advantages and privileges of the common people of this country?

To-day the power of America in Europe is such that the strongest nation there explains to our government that she is obliged to put an edict upon emigration hither from North Germany, for fear that her territory will become so depopulated that she will not have enough men for her armies. She wishes America to understand that it is not an unfriendly act in her, but one of necessity. God be thanked for that confession! In her present position, I would not weaken one hair of the head of William. In his present position, I would not weaken one single sinew in the sturdy arm of Bismarck. In their magnificent attitude of liberty of conscience and intelligence, as against the hierarchies and superstitions of the mediæval ages, I say, God bless the kingdom of Germany! Their blood is our blood. We were of them. We owe to them the best things that we receive from abroad. Coming through England, they stopped there a little to be planted as seed-corn, and then they become the seed-corn of the continent of America. Their tears were the rain which made our soil rich. They bought by suffering many of the privileges which we enjoy. And they have been divinely called to stand for the liberty and intelligence of the common people. God forbid that we should withhold from them our sympathy—particularly, when the nobles are striving against the government to maintain their own authority as against a more liberal administration.

No, Germans stay at home for the present. Though war-ridden, though overtaxed, though oppressed, and made to suffer in many ways, at present your mother needs you, and I beg you to stand by the old roof-tree, and come not hither.

But thank God that they want to come. Thank God that they ought to want to come. Thank God that there is a nation crouched down on this vast continent which has developed more wealth, more intelligence, more freedom, larger ideas and nobler policies than ever have been developed in any other nation on any such scale as here.

I do not say this, boasting as an American citizen, but that I may roll upon this people the responsibility of using their tremendous example, which is shaking the whole world to-day, in such a manner that its force shall be turned against war, and in favor of peace.

Let the common people of America have one heart in this matter. You are brothers to all those who toil in affliction on the other side of the water. The gyves have fallen from your hands, but are still on theirs. You are free, and your children have the benefit of free institutions; but look at the common people of Europe, and see how they are ground under oppression. See how they are dashed hither and thither, and used by men who through war seek to diminish the strength of the subject and increase the strength of the monarch. Let every man in America—every master-workman, and every apprentice, and every man that earns his bread by the sweat of his brow—say to his fellows in Europe, “By all that is precious in liberty, and by all that is real in religion, put down war! Let not kings compel you.”

Hate war, resist it, and raise above you such a public sentiment that no nation shall be permitted to go to war without the consent of every other Christian nation. Then we shall have come near to the time of which our text is the radiant and royal annunciation. Then the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. Then men shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks, and nations shall learn war no more.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE desire, our Father, to draw near to thee, this morning, in this place, made sacred by so many hallowed associations, to render thanksgiving to thee for all the bounties of years, and for our participation therein. We thank thee that thou hast been gracious to us individually; that thou hast spared life and health, and that thou hast bestowed so many comforts of life as have surrounded us. We desire to make mention of these things, though for the number of them we cannot remember them all. Thy goodness has been far beyond our understanding of thy mercy. Thou hast caused every law to fulfill thine enactments. Thou hast sent forth thy mercies by the sun and by the rain, in seed-time and in harvest. In all those mighty working laws by which the earth hath been so far blessed, thou hast spoken to us of thy thought of mercy.

We thank thee for all that thou hast granted unto us in our relations together in the household; for the plenitude of thy bounties therein; for all our joy in affection; and for all the hope that springs therefrom.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to us, more and more, the spirit of thanksgiving, as a gift from God. Accept all the bounty of our affection for that which comes to us through love, and trust, and hope, and fidelity. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant, O Lord, that we may feel, also, what great mercies have been bestowed upon us in the circumstances in which we have labored, and by which we have been surrounded. Though we have not been without our burdens; though we have not been without care, thou hast made the years profitable. And even when evil has seemed to overwhelm us, thou hast educed good from seeming evil. And thou hast, in thy providence, wondrously wrought in our hearts.

We desire to make mention of these things; and, while we confess our sins, and our unworthiness, and thy goodness, we desire, O Lord our God, to recognize thy continued mercy, and the unceasing flow of thy bounty.

We pray that thou wilt grant to us, also, a heart of gratitude for the blessings which thou hast vouchsafed to our nation. We thank thee that peace hath yet continued in its borders. We thank thee that thou art slowly but surely gathering together the hearts of this great people in a unity too firm and solid to be broken. We thank thee that thou hast been pleased to put into the hearts of men the desire to spread knowledge and intelligence to every one that walketh upon the earth. We pray that thou wilt grant that more and more intelligence, and moral culture, and faith in God, and love to man, may pervade the hearts of the people. For every step of development which we see, for every victory which we have gained or are gaining, we render thee, this day, thanksgiving and praise.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt be pleased to look in mercy upon the President of these United States, and all those who are in authority with him. Hold them strongly by the hand, and inspire them divinely by thy Spirit, that they may perceive the things which are right and just and best, and execute them.

Give wisdom, we pray thee, in the councils of the Legislature of this State, which is about to assemble, and of all the Legislatures of the neighboring States; and grant that that wisdom as expressed in their laws and their policy, may be more and more pervaded with the divine wisdom.

We pray that thou wilt grant, O Lord our God, a blessing to rest upon our Army and Navy, and upon all the officers therein, in their administration, and upon all the men who are serving therein. Grant that they may be restrained from all things that are intemperate, and from all things that are cruel and

anjust. And more and more may they be the servants of national justice. More and more may they serve the State in love.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all classes and conditions of men in our land—upon the poor; upon the outcast; upon the ignorant; upon all that are overthrown; upon the vicious and the criminal. We pray that they may be brought under restraint, under the divine influence, and reformed, and made whole men.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the nations of the earth. Take away from them the heart of cruelty. Endue them more and more with sentiments of humanity and of justice. Wilt thou speed the cause of the right, and build up, at last, that public sentiment which shall carry in it the very heart of the Gospel by which men shall learn to love, and in which the love of God shall rain down mercy, all over the earth, in sympathy.

Let that glorious day come which thou hast predicted, and which hath so long given the hope, and tantalized it, of thy people. Let that day come when men shall learn war no more, and when the glory of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters fill the sea.

Hear us, in these our petitions, and answer us, through Christ our Redeemer. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless us in the word spoken. Grant, we pray thee, that we may more and more hate war, and all violence, and love peace and all its bounteous blessings. Advance thy kingdom. O thou of the white banner! push the blood-red flag down whence it came to the valley of destruction, and grant that it may itself be destroyed. Teach men to love thee. May there be that love of God which shall break forth in the love of men. Let thy kingdom come, and the whole earth be filled with thy glory. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

TRUE CHRISTIAN TOLERATION.

"And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. And when they heard it they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it, therefore? the multitudes must needs come together; for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads; and all may know that those things whereof they were informed concerning thee are nothing; but that thou thyself walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood and from strangled, and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them."—Acts XXI. 17—26.

On a former occasion, I spoke from this passage as illustrating the great matter of Christian liberality and liberty, as a sort of enfranchisement of conscience. It is for another purpose that I use it this morning.

This was, to all intents and purposes, a council: of course, not exactly what we call a council in our day, because there were no such churches then as we have now, in practice, or in organization even. This was, however, a body composed of the authoritative men among the Christian people of Jerusalem. The elders were all gathered together. And it will amuse you to hear what the reason was. Paul was on trial for want of orthodoxy! Dr. Dwight, whom we now bow the knee to, was very much suspected, during his life-time, of want of orthodoxy; Jonathan Edwards, whom all our theologians swear by, in his day suffered a great deal of disre-

pute, for want of orthodoxy ; every man, all the way up, who has laid the church under obligation—Calvin, Luther, Melancthon, Zwinglius, and others—have suffered in their day and generation, as being disturbers, unsettling the belief of men ; but it does strike us as very strange that Paul should have been arraigned on the ground of laxity of practice and uncertainty of belief, and should have been obliged to purge himself—as he was.

Christianity was not a new religion that came drifting against the wind, as one might say, right up to a battle with Judaism. It was a new revelation that gradually came up to quench the old one, and take its place ; as in growth, the lower stem shoots out another, which surpasses it in organization, and gradually out of that shoots another, until we come to the blossoming top, and from that to the fruit. As there is no antagonism between the root and the branches ; as the blossom is developed from the root, through the intermediate stages of growth from the lowest to the highest form ; so Judaism was a root stalk. This developed as far as it could, and then, in the fullness of times, Jesus Christ came to carry it on and up. It was in the line of the Jewish faith that Christianity itself was developed.

Now, if you reflect, you will perceive that where such a state of facts takes place, there will be a great many things in the form of antecedent beliefs and institutions, which will be only relatively important, and that the weak will stick to everything, that the unreasoning will hold on to everything which has existed in the past, simply because it has been useful ; but that there will be other intelligent ones who see that the new includes the old, and a good deal besides. And all such persons, while they will tolerate the old, will accept the new. They will say, "The old was right, but it was relative. It is not superseded : it is fulfilled, and is carried, in another form, higher."

The blossoming of a stem does not destroy the plant, but fulfills it. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through flesh," Jesus Christ, coming, did. He did not, then, come to destroy the law, as he himself said ; but to fulfill it ; to give it a spiritual form : a full, final growth ; a free, glorious development. And when that time comes in which men are beginning to take their first steps away from the old and fixed, and towards the new, the free and the large, there must of necessity be great division, great diversity. And here is the place where the old and new schools always set in. The old school wants to hold the old things as they were ; the new school wants to hold the old things, and wants to hold them just as they ought to be. On the one hand, there are influences at work

which tend to drive the old school into a kind of superstitious adhesion—into a conservatism which has in it no growth and no respectability. On the other hand, the tendencies are to drive the new school entirely away from the old school into something different—something that shall not resemble it. But in point of fact, the old is the father of the new, and the new should always have filial relations to the old. Conservatism is the stalk out of which the progressive rises; and the progressive should always have a good stem under it to stand on when the wind blows, and its limber branches wave therein.

Paul, standing before this council, was obliged to defend himself as against the Jewish prejudices, for not believing in Moses; for not believing in Mosaic customs; for teaching a new doctrine. It was an absolute departure from the religion of the Jews. Now, he had not wholly abandoned the system of his fathers. He believed in it enough to use it when circumstances required it; but he was set free from it in its absolute form. He did not believe any longer in Judaism as the unenlightened, unchristianized Jews did. He was liberal and he was skeptical, both; but his skepticism was the skepticism of the old, regarding it as not big enough and his liberality consisted in believing in more, not less.

There are two kinds of skepticism; one is measured by the mathematical sign of “minus,” that doubts and disbelieves, and goes back, and back; and the other is designated by the mathematical sign of “plus,” which disbelieves in old forms, because they are not large enough; because they are not fruitful enough; because they are not ripe enough. The skepticism “minus” is deteriorating; but the skepticism “plus” is ennobling. If there is to be change and growth, there must be in every generation times when men shall doubt the past in order to build larger. There must be times when men shall be free to set machinery in operation, which shall do more perfectly the work of God in their day and generation.

So Paul stood before this council, suspected of irregularity because he insisted on adapting his labor, not according to the old Jewish forms, but according to the exigencies of the work he found to do, in the providence of God, in the fields where he went to preach the Gospel.

I have run over this briefly, because we had a council last week, in New York. I would not pretend to say that the council for the installation of Rev. George Hepworth, which was held last week in the Brick Church, is to be compared to that council which was held in Jerusalem for clearing and purging Paul, and giving him

clean papers with which to go forth to the churches; yet I think it comes under the same head, just as a species comes under a genus, and that there is no irreverence in speaking about this New York council from the starting-point of that old council in Jerusalem over which James presided, and in which Paul was the heresiarch.

In the first place, I think it worth your while to know what a council is. Almost all ecclesiastical denominations have permanent judicatories and judicial bodies. They are called "Consistories" in the Dutch Reformed church. They are called "Presbyteries," "Synods," and "General Assemblies" in the Presbyterian church. They are permanent tribunals, and belong to the organization of these churches. In the Congregational churches, and in the Baptist churches, which are also Congregational, there are no permanent judicial bodies. Whenever the churches want, or any one of them wants light, or information on any subject, they call together, of their own will, such neighboring churches, each by its pastor and delegates, as they choose; and for the time being the council is made an advisory body; and when the church has derived from it all the light that it wants, it dissolves, and goes back to its original condition. The Congregational churches recognize that each church is itself a complete and perfected body; that it has a right to ask counsel of other neighboring bodies; but that there is no authority in any church organization over the individual and local church.

Now, a council was convened in New York, not according to the ordinary Congregational methods. It was peculiar in this respect, that it was made up of ministers from various denominations. The Episcopal church, the Methodist church, the Dutch Reformed church, the Presbyterian church, the Baptist churches, and the Congregational churches were represented. The Rev. Mr. Tyng spoke for such of his Episcopal brethren as agree with him—and that is all that anybody can do. The Rev. Bishop Foss—Mr. Foss—was present from the Methodist church, as I understand it. (I called him *Bishop*, because I thought he would have been one, and because I suppose he will be one before a great while.) The Presbyterian church, besides Professor Martin, Dr. Murray, and others, was represented by no less eminent, revered and beloved a man than Dr. McCosh, president of Princeton College. And if he, trained in Scotland, among the orthodox Presbyterians, is not a judge of orthodoxy, I do not know where you will find a man that is. The Dutch Reformed church had Dr. Ormiston present. Dr. Armitage, as I am informed, represented the Baptist churches.

The Rev. R. S. Storrs, the Rev. Dr. Budington, the Rev. Dr. Taylor of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, and others, represented the Congregational churches.

I call your attention to the composition of this council; and I say that, as I recollect former days, such a thing as this was then totally impossible. As I recollect the state of feeling in churches during my youth, to have brought together such a council to sit in the common work of examining a man and installing him over an Apostolic charge—a council made up of Old and New School Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and members of the Dutch Reformed church—was simply out of the question.

That fact alone is one of God's hand-boards with the unmistakable finger pointing in the direction in which providence is guiding the churches and the world at the present time.

I remember very well the time when a minister's face of another denomination in the congregation was considered a fair target for any pulpit. I remember the time when we used to vindicate our accuracy by showing how inaccurate every one else was. I remember the time when theology meant war, and when we felt it our duty, not simply to be right ourselves, but to make everybody feel that he was not right unless he was as we were.

This council, by the by, sat in a place which is memorable. Where did it sit? In the old Brick Church—no, it is in the *new* Brick one; but it is the Old church in the new brick, which once stood near Printing House Square. It was for a hundred years the sign and symbol of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian church. It has had a very noble history. No name is more memorable in our annals than that of the Rev. Dr. Gardiner Spring, who was for half a century teacher and preacher in that church. And that church it was which threw open its doors to this miscellaneous council.

And who was the man they were going to examine? George Hepworth. And who is Mr. Hepworth? A man born of Unitarian parents, reared in the Unitarian theology, during all his early years a minister in that denomination, and late the pastor of the church of the Messiah in New York. He went from that church, by a change of experience, into a nearer alliance with what are called the "Evangelical denominations;" and his place was made good in the church of the Messiah by our friend and late neighbor of the Congregational church, the Rev. Mr. Powers, who, following his own sympathies, went over to the Unitarian faith, and is settled where Mr. Hepworth was, as pastor of the church of the Messiah. I shall not pause on those facts, which, however, are significant;

but it was this Mr. Hepworth, so born, so reared, and so bred, that came to be examined before the council made up of venerable and authoritative ministers of five or six of the great Christian denominations of the day, sitting in that august seat of orthodoxy, the Brick Church in New York.

And now, what did they do with him? Did they take him, as forty years ago, as thirty years ago, as twenty years ago they would have taken him, as a vile rag of heresy, and put him in a tub, and scrub him till there was nothing of him, or until all that was left of him was white and clean? That is what they would have done with him if he had gone before the council that I went before, when I was examined and installed. They would have put him through all the points of theology, commencing at the beginning of the Westminster Catechism, and, without omitting a particle of doctrine, going clear through to the end. But what was the action of this council, made up of such men as Dr. Ormiston and Dr. Murray—these men who are *magisters*, masters in theology—what was their action in respect to this man, who came in from the Unitarian side of Christianity, and asked to be installed, with the fellowship and consent of the orthodox evangelical churches, as the pastor, in good standing, of this church in New York? What was their examination of him? It almost entirely left out technical theology. I was not present at the examination; but I was told by those who were, that Mr. Hepworth simply made a relation of the steps by which he had so far changed his view of truth and duty, as to feel less at home with his former friends, and more attracted to and at home with his present friends; and that it was the relation of his personal experience—the development in his soul of the need of something higher than a human Saviour; the gradual dawning upon him of the faith that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, and very God for him; the development in his soul, also, of a conviction of the reality of the doctrines of the Gospel in regard to the sinfulness of man, in regard to that operation of the Spirit by which men are regenerated, and in regard to the implanting of a true spiritual manhood in men by the power of the Holy Ghost—that it was this relation of personal experience on which they founded their decision:—not any dogmatic forms; not any sharp philosophic statements. On the relation of matters of his personal experience, before that council, they, with thanks, and with very great gratulation and joy, without a single exception, unanimously voted to accept Brother Hepworth, and proceeded with the installation service, which took place last Tuesday night, in the Brick Church, in the city of New York.

That was the Council; that was the action of the Council; that was the place; and that was the man: now, what is the inference?

First, I infer from this action, the growth, under divine Providence, of the principles of spiritual affinity rather than of theological repulsion. I infer, fairly, that that repugnance which has hitherto been generated by differences of external organization and external activities; that that repugnance which belongs to the flesh, and to organizations in the flesh, is losing power; and that the affinities which spring from like aspirations, like views, like joys, and like desires, are increasing. Only so can you account for the existence of such a council, for its action, and for its results.

The grounds on which the council accepted this candidate were not directly grounds of theology, except as all piety implies underlying theology. They accepted the fact that this man had been brought by the Spirit of God into the same state of feeling and hope that they themselves had; and they argued just as Peter argued, and they accepted Mr. Hepworth's statement on the same grounds that the council that examined Paul accepted Peter's argument: *Since God by his Spirit gave them the same gifts that he gave us, what are we, that we should resist God?*

Secondly, the absolute unanimity of vote in this council I regard as very significant; because the members of it represented very widely different statements of thought; and it is not to be supposed that a single one of them regarded himself as giving up any of his views, or theories or doctrines. Do you suppose that when Dr. McCosh voted for Mr. Hepworth, with his mild and nebulous statement, he meant to be understood as saying that he did not consider a clear, sharp-cut system of thought as very desirable? Right over against him was the Arminian theologian; and do you suppose that he relinquished the Arminian view of truth as he held it strongly and systematically? By no means. But there was a way found by which every member of that council—Baptist, Congregationalist, Episcopalian, Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, Methodist—held on to his theology, and yet voted for this man, whose theology was one which probably did not jump exactly with any of theirs. The candidate had little technical and dogmatic precision. He had, however, an experience, a practical aim, a working intention, which covered the ground of orthodoxy. It was a case like that of Peter and Cornelius. The spirit was right, and substantially the underlying thought was right. His views may have been crude and unsystematic; but they were counted by these men as sufficient, inasmuch as they had in them truth, the mind and will of Christ,

and the power of usefulness. And they were willing to trust this man to the guidance of God, as he had proved himself to be under the leadings of the Divine Spirit. There is great growth in that. It is no small thing.

I should consider a council very dangerous that came together and said, "It makes no difference whether you take Calvinistic or Arminian views." I should say that such a council was weak and foolish. The only proper ground is that thinking men ought to be trained to think sharply, accurately, and distinctly. And if such men have the opportunity to do it, they ought to cohere their thinkings into a system. A creed is as natural to a man as clothes; and men ought to have creeds.

But, Thirdly, when men have got creeds, it is in their power to hold them as true, without at the same time saying that they are infallible and absolute, and that all other modes of stating the same range of truth is necessarily erroneous and dangerous.

It is this holding the truth as it is given to *you*, with fidelity to your convictions, and at the same time allowing other men to hold the truth as it is revealed to *them*—it is this which means *Christian toleration*. It is growth in the direction of the power of men to sit together—ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred men, representing four or five complex systems of philosophy or theology—and yet, to see in each other that essential spirit of love, and that power of the Holy Ghost, by which each man shall say, "I shall do my work by my method, and you may do your work by your method." The work is more than the workman; and the Spirit of God under which we are working is greater than your or my technical statement of the truth. There is a great ripening, not toward the liberalism of indifference, but toward that higher and grander liberality in which men of positive convictions and clean-cut thoughts are able to say, "Not only have I the liberty to hold my own views, but I accredit to every other man the liberty to hold his views as freely as I hold mine; and yet I call him brother." That is a spirit of brotherhood and piety which rises higher and shines brighter than any technical theories or opinions.

This council was remarkable because it was not meant to imply, and it did not imply, as I have said, indifference to theology. And no more did it imply indifference to church government, nor to the worship and rights of denominations. If men say, "Well, denominations, sects, are all going to the dust," no, they are not. Mr. Tyng gave the charge to the pastor—and it was as sweet a charge as ever fell from mortal lips—it was honey from the honeycomb; and did he, substantially, say that he considered loose Congregation-

alism as good as Episcopacy? No, he did not. If that were his feeling, why had he not gone into the Congregational Church?

When I go into my grounds, and prune my trees, I always cut from the bottom up. My theory is that the sun, striking on the cut place, cracks it, so that the rain, falling on the part thus laid open, runs under the bark, and rots it; therefore I cut up; and in that way the wound is protected. But my neighbor cuts from the top down. He says that the sun heals the wound quicker, by thickening the juices more rapidly. At the same time, we never quarreled on the subject. I think that my way is the best, and he thinks that his is the best; but we never threw a stone at each other.

Are there two men who work in the same direction, and work with the same instrumentalities? Are there two men who conduct their business alike? It is interesting to hear men of the same trade criticize each other, when they do it in a friendly spirit.

I have heard two lumbermen discuss each the way in which the other cut his logs in the woods, the method which he pursued in rafting them to the mills, and the mode in which he organized his gangs. Each had his own ideas about the best plan of procedure, and thought they were right, and argued against those of the other; they differed widely in their notions as to how the business should be carried on; and yet they were good warm friends, and were able to go along together without let or hindrance. "Live and let live," is their practical maxim.

There are no two families, probably, that make bread just alike, or that make up their beds just alike. Scarcely any two families govern their servants just alike, or proceed on precisely the same principles of economy. Some people economize in one way, and some in another. Some people are tight in the place where others are loose; and some are loose where others are tight. And so it goes. Yet neighbors manage to live together and respect each other. Not only do they contrive to prevent war in the neighborhood, but they do not feel that they have lost any conscience, or self-respect, or sincerity, when they shake hands all round, and say to each other, "Well, I suppose your way is good for you, and mine is good for me; and I am willing that you should have your way, while I claim the right to have mine." There may be superiority in some ways, and one may see that superiority, while another does not.

I do not undertake to say that when these five or six men of different denominations came together, they came to show their disgust for denominationalism. They probably went back to their

several places, saying, in regard to their own methods, "These are the ways which we like, and which we think are best; but we do not consider them indispensable; and if another denomination likes any other modes better, why should they not be allowed to use them? And why should we break friendship with them because they do not think exactly as we do?"

This council, then, did not signify that theology was of no consequence; but it did signify that it thought the Spirit of God in a man was of more importance than any particular form of theology. I think it meant that, if it did not state it. This was not a council that said, in the common, promiscuous language of the day, "All sects, all denominations of religion are to be swept away, and there is to be a great unity yet." No, not till there is a different God. God does not love unity. Where do you find a hint of that kind in nature? The vast and final perfect thing will be made up of infinite, *infinite* variations; and the road to final unity is the road to endless diversities. Differentiation every where; myriads of different beings doing the same things by different methods; one idea expressed by ten thousand different forms of organization, scattered up and down through creation—this is the divine idea as revealed to us in organization. By his providence God makes men different. And He makes different men to work differently. One works by feeling; another by imagination; another by the perceptive reason; another by the reflective reason; another by all of these combined. Different minds do things differently. All things do not strike in the same way on all these human mirrors before me. If, when I speak, I had the power of discerning your thoughts, I should see that many of you are thinking of things which I do not mean, and that many of you mean things which I do not think. And so when men say that there ought to be a great unity, that all the denominations ought to be ground up together, I say no, no, NO! I would not have them all united in one.

I think very well of elm trees; but I would not have all trees converted into elms, for the world. I think admirably well of the oak; but I should be tired if there were nothing but oaks in the world. I think supremely well of the old cedar of Lebanon; but I should be sorry to see cedars of Lebanon take the place of all other trees. No, let us have oaks, let us have elms, let us have beeches, let us have ashes, let us have all forms of blossoming trees. Let us have trees of all heights, and all methods of development. Let us have all those growths which are so beautiful to the eyes, and which are so useful withal. The hickory has no right to throw

its nuts over at the chestnut because it is not a hickory ; nor has the chestnut a right to pitch its burs at the hickory because it is not a chestnut. The persimmon has no right to make faces at the apple-tree, nor has the apple-tree a right to throw its fruit at the persimmon. The apple-tree, the peach-tree, the pear-tree, each stands on its own root, and performs its own functions in its own way. The world is a great museum of variations in unity.

Let not men, therefore, despise denominations. I glory in them. I glory in Episcopacy ; I glory in Presbyterianism ; I glory in the modified Episcopacy of the Methodist church ; I glory in the stout individualism of the Baptists ; I glory in any denomination that I see has the power in it to go out into the world and subdue it to civilization and Christianity. And because it differs from the denomination to which I belong, or because its mode of working differs from my mode, it is not to be despised.

Shall I refuse to cross the deep unless I can go in a ship that is built in all respects after the pattern which I think is best ? All yachts are not built alike. Your yacht is built after one pattern, and mine is built after another ; mine is the best, of course, although you think yours is the best ! But shall I despise your yacht because it is not like mine ? Yet people insist that in theology we shall be built exactly alike—as much alike as the Newfoundland fishermen are ; and as much in the fog, too !

It does not seem to me that any members of this council have sacrificed their theology for mine, or for any other form of theology. It does not seem to me that they have sacrificed anything which belongs to their peculiar organizations. But what have they done ? They have borne witness that there is something more important than any of these external things—namely, *the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*. They have said that a living man who has proved himself to be a Christian workman, whose whole spirit and temper have been under the divine influence through months and years, whose faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is manifest, who shows himself to have been sanctified by the Spirit of the living God, and who has power to call men from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God's glory—they have said that such a man is to be taken and fellowshiped. They have not said that he is so much right and so much wrong, but that the fact that the manhood of Christ was given him is a fact transcendent, superior, dominant.

This event is not, in any sense, to be called a victory of the new over the old. It merely shows that that divine Providence which has watched over the church, and adapted it to the several

ages in which it has existed, is now guarding it and leading it into new spheres, and to new duties. God is inspiring his church with wisdom to meet the new exigencies which are arising. The work which we have to do is not the work that was done in England during the Reformation, nor the work that was done during the Reformation on the Continent. There was a time when it was necessary that men should defend their lives and civil rights by a statement of their faith, built up as solid as the walls of a fort. Those days have passed away. Those things which were by circumstances made obligatory on men then and there, are not binding on us now and here. When, in England, in the times of Henry VIII. and of Elizabeth, a man's life was not worth a year's purchase who did not believe in the communion of the Lord's Supper; when it was a civil offense, a crime punishable by the courts, not to believe so and so, and in such and such things—then, in such an exigency, the definite statement of a man's views and convictions was a matter of some importance. The age then demanded something fixed in belief; but it does not demand it now. We have passed into a new sphere; into a sphere of other questions and interests.

For example, what is our work to-day? Is it to erect such barriers between the civil and the ecclesiastical tribunals, by the formation and holding of creeds, as shall shield us? Are we attempting, as Calvin did, to break the power of a despotic church over men, and, not setting them free from belief in religion, to give them such an intellectual system as shall stand in the place of the old organized system? Are we called to such a work? Not at all. It does not belong to our day.

What is God's providence saying to us, to those across the deep, to the world over, to nations, and to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ? "Go in and possess the land." What is the cry to-day, but "Civilization, Education, and knowledge of Christ?" The whole earth is calling to the church, and saying, "Send us the light of Christianity—the Word of God. Teach us! teach us!" What, in our own home-land, so large, so far-reaching toward the oceans and toward the pole; what, in the wonderful development among us of immigration, both from other lands and from remote parts of our own—from the valleys and the mountain passes; what, in the midst of this population that spreads itself from shore to shore of the continent, and whose great engineering of civilization are felt every where—what here, is the call? Are we called to be sharp in matters of theology, and to make our doctrines like arrows to torment men withal? No! the call is to activity, to practical

work; and there are a few substantial facts of belief which are sufficient for this universal activity. And God is indicating that he is bringing together the hearts of all Christians, not by leading them to give up their distinctive forms and theologies, but by placing before them a common end which is more important than any of those distinctive features—the conversion of the continent—the civilization and enlightenment of this great nation, than which none other on the globe has greater promise. There are other countries which are vaster in extent and more populous; but what population has Russia which can be compared with this population?

Our work, then, is evangelization; civilization; giving intelligence with conscience; inspiring a holy and sanctified life; spreading the light of truth abroad everywhere. And that we may be helped in this thing, God is letting down streams of light in every direction, which, though as they are manipulated they may for the time being seem to be antagonistic, are, I think, more beneficial than all the influences of the church have been for many generations. I mean the very great progress which is now being made by scientific investigation into the origin and nature of man; into the theory of society; into the questions of obligation, and sociology, and jurisprudence, and law, and humanity. These things are passing under the inquisition of science in these later days.

Let no man think that by such an inquisition we lose any thing which we ought to keep. I think we shall have more assured truth than we ever have had. We may turn out more ignorant than we have been accustomed to suppose ourselves to be. We do not know as much as we think we do; and to find this out will be a good thing.

"I am all gold," says the great nugget, as it comes out of the mine. "I will see what you are," says the chemist; and he puts it into the crucible. A part of it proves to be gold, and a part of it slag. The lump of gold is not so big by one half when it comes out as it was when it went in; but it is pure gold that comes out, and dross that is left behind.

We are full of conceit. The developments of the ages accumulating upon us, have filled us with what we think to be knowledge and certainties. Much of it will prove to be false. But when we come out after having been put into the alembic, the little that we shall bring with us will be worth more than all that we carried in. For the truth, in its own self, is immutable, universal, absolute—not relative. A little of that truth which is true, and universal to human thought and human consciousness, is worth mountains of truth which is only relative, and which is believed to be true by men of a particular organization or conformation.

We are coming on to an age when there are to be great trials in regard to convictions of faith, and statements of orthodoxy. We are coming on to times when there are to be great trials of doctrine. But the Word of God standeth sure. When we come to that ground where we make no more pretensions for this dear old book [the Bible] than it makes for itself; when we take it and hold it just as it presents itself to us, as an epitome of the ripest experiences of men down through a long period of development; when we bring to the knowledge of our fellow men, as it has been made known to us by more scientific methods, the doctrine of the sinfulness of man—that is to say, such a condition as needs divine unfolding, and has a divine Revelator that has the power to regenerate and sanctify, and declares the doctrine of the relations of this life to the other life, in respect to God, spirit, necessity, weakness, inner want, supplication, help, transformation—when we do this, the teachings of Scripture will be summed up, I think, and will be the voice, not of the Calvinist, nor of the Arminian, nor of any sect, nor of any man outside of sects, but of God, speaking in the world, and in the consciousness of men, in the experience and knowledge of the schools, and in nature itself. Great will be the power of pure truth, and great will be the abundance of the fruit thereof.

To that day we are to contribute, Christian brethren. To that day every man contributes who lives a better life; who leaves behind him a higher notion of manhood; who makes it plain to the poor and needy that they can live better than they are living. Whoever, by domestic industry, by fortitude in suffering, by gentleness in trial, and by a benevolent self-denial which carries with it, and fortifies, and makes sweeter, any of the other Christian graces; whoever lives a noble life for Christ and God—he is one of God's workmen, working on that great building of which God is the supreme Architect.

Holy living is right thinking, first or last. Live better, and you will have fewer controversies, fewer divisions, and more of that unity which consists of the divine whole, made up of infinite parts brought into harmony. Unity is no monochord. Unity is that grand swelling symphony played on a hundred instruments, and in a score of parts, and yet so interwoven that the one great sound, made up of hundreds and thousands of minor sounds, shall be a unity of harmony.

May God so unite us, and prepare us for his work, at home, abroad, and everywhere; and may those signs and tokens which we behold encourage us to duty, to purity of life, to more power of faith, to greater hopefulness and to greater industry.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we would not take thy blessings and go away thankless, as men who find bread in a house uninhabited eat it, and thank no one. We desire that every mercy may suggest thee, and that every suggestion of our God may be full of rebuke for what is evil in us, and full of hope and encouragement in our struggles to overcome evil. We thank thee that we are not left to be as the clod. We thank thee that thou hast advanced us high in the chain of being, and that we are moving toward thee, to discern thee, and that that which is beyond us is beginning to dawn upon us—the sight of God; the realization of things transcendent; the belief that the eye and the senses do not contain all the truth, but that there are beyond infinite depths and things transcendent, and relations inconceivably beautiful and dear, and beings noble above every human conception, and a God who is not fate, nor power, nor despotism, but a Father in all the glow and nobleness of Fatherhood in one so transcendent above men in their weakness. We set our faces toward this great beyond. We cannot fathom it; no one returns to tell us what it is; yet we believe that it is there. We listen at evening to its far-off word, and hear only what we think we hear; yet we believe that the singers are there, and that the joy is there, and that infinite and noble occupations are there. And our hearts are drawn by something: is it not by thy Spirit, Father? We yearn: is it not thy Spirit that prays within us with yearnings unutterable? We rejoice: is it not the joy of the Holy Ghost?

Out of trouble and out of temptation we come. As the sailors from the stormy sea, into bays surrounded by land green and tranquil; so we come into houses of peace from the tumult of this world. Is it not thy guiding hand that brings us into this peace which passeth all understanding? We desire, O Lord our God, to be lifted up still more by this buoying presence: by this power within; we are so helpless—we are so far away from the knowledge of things transcendent. We have no wings by which to fly to thee. We can only sit, as birds, callow and unfledged, sit upon the nest, and cry out for bread to parents that bring it. We can call out to thee; but how little can we do! We believe that the day is coming when we shall see thee as thou art; but how far are we now from being able to see thee as thou art! The day is coming when we shall stand in resolute strength; but how full of manifold weakness are we now! We believe that the day is not far distant when the whole atmosphere shall be filled with peace, and shall glow with love; but we are in the midst of selfishness, and of pride, and of avarice, and of rivalries, and of a thousand evil passions which seek to dominate, with which we make battle by conscience and hope and all fidelity, and in which battle we are helped by the constant inspirations of thy Spirit. We believe that the victory is ours. We believe that yet we shall wear the crown. We believe that thou hast been a Captain guiding us toward victory, and that our crown shall be through thy valor, and through thy wondrous love and mercy. Grant, not simply that we may be overwhelmed with joy in the life to come, but that some joy may come to us here. May something of heaven be ours upon earth. Grant that here we may have some leaf from the tree of life; some drop from the water of life; some throb from that Heart which bears with the life of the universe.

Reveal thyself in us from day to day, and lift us above the domain of low and vulgar things. Grant that we may walk as seeing Him who is invisible, and wear something of the majesty of his nature, and forget not, any day, that we are the sons of God, but remember what things befit such sonship, and what things are unbecfitting.

We pray that we may never sit down to build here as if this were the

place for firm foundations, or as if there could be a home where death is at liberty to invade on every side; where come various overwhelming disasters which prostrate all inspiring hopes; where there is no untrembling ground, and no sea that is not full of storms. May we not think of putting all that we have here, and venturing all, and forever; but may we have treasure in heaven; and there may our heart be where our treasure is.

We pray for the consolation of thy Spirit, to-day, upon all those who have been greatly tried; upon all those who have borne the burden and heat of the day. Whatever may be their trouble, and however it may deal with them in its individual application, grant that they may have this consolation, that it is not accident nor fate; that it springs not from the ground; that it comes not from the dust; and though it may be the ministration of law, and may spring from their own carelessness or sinfulness, may they believe that, nevertheless, such is the economy of thy grace that it is the Lord who guideth all things. And may they feel able to go through the things which are earnest and next to them, and to behold the Comforter, and to hear him say, "What things I know, ye know not, but ye shall know hereafter." O that we may be able to roll care, and burdens, and bereavement, and heartsickness, and hopelessness, and all manifold disappointments, into the great hereafter where God is, and where tears are not; where we shall be, and where joy shall abide upon our head forever.

We pray that thou wilt be very near to those who are watching over their sick—to parents whose children are on beds of sickness; to companions who sit by the bedside of companions; to friends who are befriending the poor and needy. May all, to-day, who lift up silent thoughts for thy succor feel that God's angels are descending around about them. Restore the sick to health, that are appointed thereto. Give those grace to see the joy of their meeting in heaven who are sent for by thee, and who are permitted to go forth from school into the light and liberty of their Father's house.

Bless those who have the burdens of life upon them. May they be more royal in their trust, and learn to cast off care. As the ship in the sea goes through, or rides over, or sheds off from its deck, the water that flows therein, so may we voyagers be able to stand the ocean and the storm, and make our port at last.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt bless all those who desire our prayers. All those un murmuring hearts who know not how to frame their vague thoughts into petitions—help them. Help all those who are helping the helpless. Give courage and strength to all those who are making themselves fathers and mothers to orphan children. Give great grace to those apostles who have been ordained by love to go out and seek little children who have none to teach them, and who are teaching them in our schools and Bible classes. Be with those who seek to guide the young over the snares of life, and to open for them the doors of opportunity. May they never be sorry for what they have done; and may they never be proud of that little which they have accomplished. In the face of Him who gave his life for them, what are the hours that they give for their fellows?

We pray that thou wilt bless all thy people in their church associations and civic relations. May thy churches learn more and more the blessing of union and love. And we pray that that peace which belongs to the heart of God may be breathed more and more upon them. May the clangor and trumpet, and the tramp of armed men, and the groans of the wounded, cease; and may the sound of the sweet silver trumpet of the Gospel be heard; and may the joy above be mingled with the joy below, as we unite in praising the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

THE REMNANTS OF SOCIETY.

"And it shall come to pass in that day that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sands of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord God of hosts shall make a consumption, even determined, in the midst of all the land."—ISA. x., 20-23.

We can hardly understand such language as this in our time, because in our national life and personal history we have never been subject to those strange mutations which befell the kingdom of Israel. The summit had been passed. Their political glory had ceased, and the great kingdom which inspired such admiration was never again to be gathered. They were split asunder. They had been repeatedly carried away captive. We can hardly understand what it means where a whole nation is torn up by the roots, and deported, carried away, into a foreign land; and where, by and by, in the capricious mood of some despot, a portion of them are allowed to go back again,—a mere fragment. For, in the carrying away of a million people, how many perish by the sword! How many perish by the brutality of drivers! How many perish by exposure and by various want! How many perish heart-broken! How are families scattered! How is the whole nation torn asunder and dispersed! And when a few are gathered together, and they turn to go back, what is this remnant? Wandering from place to place in the promised land, crossing the Jordan, finding a heap where once there was a flourishing city, drawing near to the home of their ancestry, and finding it in the hands of foreigners, themselves regarded as intruders and outcasts, what a harrowing experience theirs must be! And what class of people ever needed so much divine sympathy and succor as those who returned to the promised land from which they had been expelled and separated in long exile to find it hard and inhospitable.

pitiable, with scarcely the power of entrance, and with little power of living, and with no prospect of establishing again the old commonwealth, the old prosperity, the old worship, and the old home feeling?

Now, it was under such circumstances as these that the prophets did their chief work. We sit in our ceiled houses, and read of the prophecies of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, and of Ezekiel, and often turn up our noses at their sanguine expectations, and frequently are severe and unchristian in the denunciations which we heap upon them; but go back in imagination to the time when a great people are rooted up and peeled bare, and are left without worship, without homes, without protectors, with nothing but desolation staring them in the face; and then imagine that there rises up among them a man of natural moral grandeur. Imagine that he stands in their midst, and declares that their oppressors who have so long well-nigh crushed out the national life, are themselves to be threshed as with a flail by the hand of God, and that their life shall be assured to them by the decree of the Almighty. Is there no grandeur in the function or office of a prophet when he stands in the presence of a poor, despoiled band of people, and makes them feel that the hand of power shall not for ever be so strong against them? For with words of cheer, and with an inexpressible richness of imagery, he comforts them, and says: "Although the present is drear and desolate, it is only the stepping-stone that leads to a precious day which impends just before you in that new kingdom in which is to dwell righteousness. There shall come the glory of the Lord. All your sons and daughters shall be brought back to you. You shall see the temple rebuilt. Your cities shall be restored, and shall be as they were at first, or shall shine with more than pristine glory; and the Lord shall dwell with you."

Some men, criticising these prophecies, say: "They were evidently mistaken. Do not you see that those things were represented as to happen almost immediately? and yet nearly two thousand years have gone by, and they have not taken place!" Looking at this as only a part of a chronological table, it may seem as though the predictions of the old prophets were not true; but looking at it in its interior spirit, as God meant that it should be viewed is it not calculated to encourage and comfort people in their desolateness and distress? Was not the vision of the future the very thing that would do it?

The wonderful tenderness that pervades Providence is the proper counterpart of those terrible denunciations of judgment

with which God clothed the mind and imagination of his ancient servants. If the proportion is not exactly kept, we are to remember that God's words of threatening and reward are adjusted to the need of the times in which they are uttered. When men are rude, and their susceptibilities are coarse, and they require more intense motive, then such motive is applied to them. But as men, by obedience and moral culture, grow more susceptible, the milder parts of the Gospel are employed. In other words, there is the principle of adaptation such as parents employ toward their children—first, teaching them as babes must be taught, and readapting the teaching all the way up to manhood. So has God been accustomed to deal with men in his administration. Up to a given point people and nations had thunders over their head; but when their natures have become milder, and they have become more tractable, and more desirous of things high than of things low, they have been drawn and won, rather than driven by threatening.

This *remnant* of the Israelitish people is itself a word which has a very wide use; and in proceeding to make some adaptation of this passage to our own times and to our own wants, think a moment of what is meant by a *remnant*. It does not mean simply a few; neither does it mean merely the last things; though it includes both of these ideas.

When one has cut out a garment from a web of cloth, there is a selvedge, there are the side pieces, of curious shapes, and there is at last the tail-piece—a little bit left. The main and best parts have been taken out and used. Although they are of as good substance as the rest, there are these edges, the intermediate bits, and the final remaining part; and all these are called *the remnants*. They are not exactly waste, but they are parts that are left over after the good has been principally taken out.

Out of no carpenter's shop does the timber ever come as large as it went in. It is hewn, it is planed, it is cut, it is sawed; in various ways it is reduced; and after the comely shapes have been sawn out, all that remains is of but little benefit. It may be good for fuel, but it hardly can be good for manufacturing purposes. The chips, the shavings, the slabs, the edges, the intermediate pieces—they are the remnants of the carpenter's work—the parts which have not been used up for commercial objects.

Look in upon a household after all the children have been fed, after all the servants have eaten, and the table is cleared off, and see what is left. See the bones; the gristle; the scraps of meat that are stringy, and not easily chewed; the bits of potato; the pieces of confection; the heap of fragments. These are the rem-

nants of the meal. Some of them are too good to throw away, and some of them are too poor to keep. They make a solid jumble—a mass for the maw of poverty.

Look at the remnant in the harvest—all those stray stalks of wheat in the blackberry edges of the uncomely farm; all those that have fallen by the way; the gleanings; the refuse of the field.

So, in all the phases of society—in the Army; in the Navy; in business circles; in the household; everywhere, there is a remnant constantly coming up. It is the portion which is left after the better or more favored has been culled out and used; and it is in respect to the remnants of society that I am going to speak this morning.

Consider God's great tenderness toward the remnant of his people—toward what were left. After war; after famine; after captivity; after long desolations abroad; after the return of the people in their poverty, what was left over was called *a remnant*. When the bulk of the nation had been destroyed, and its power had been broken, and its ambition had been discouraged, there was something still left, and that was called *a remnant*. And God's heart deals with inexpressible kindness toward such remnants.

Did you ever think of the remnants of society. Did you ever ponder the disintegrations that are going on all the time in human society?

When a large army is moving through the country, on a long and urgent march, hardly will they have gone a half score of miles before some from weakness, some from lameness, some from one reason and some from another, will begin to step out of the ranks; and every day the number will increase of the stragglers that will drop down by the wayside if they are sick or worn out, or skulk in the woods or behind the fences if they are cowards.

But human society is a vaster army than was ever engaged in warfare, technically so called; and the number of those who fall out of the ranks of society is infinitely greater than the number of those who ever fell out of any army that was gathered on the field of battle.

Did you ever think of human society in this point of view—the incessant dropping down and falling behind of men? We usually take statistics of the prosperous men in society. We think of the men who succeed. We think of the enterprise, the ingenuity, the inventive skill, the various achievements and accumulations of men. We think of men who accomplish results. But who stands to take an accurate account of all the weak; of all those who drop behind; of all those who stumble; of all those who

are run over by the thick treading multitude round about them and behind them? Who cares for them? How few men are cared for by their fellow men? Each household cares for its own members; but who are they whose hearts are large enough to think of that other great household which exists within society, and which is perpetually changing place, sifting, sifting, sifting, shaking, shaking, shaking, and working downward, further and further, toward the bottom? Who thinks of that great mass of remnants?

We remember the man who stood by us two or three years ago. He has disappeared. We have not heard anything about him lately. We say to some one who knew him, "What has become of Mr. B.?" "Well, I don't know. He failed, and I heard some ill of him—I have forgotten what it was; but I have not seen him for years. I believe he has gone West." "Where is Mr. Z., that used to do business over there?" "I don't know. None of his neighbors know." Track him, trace him out, and you will find that, being weak, his steps grew feebler and feebler until he died. *Consumption* they called his disease; but it was want of raiment, want of nourishing food, and want of sustaining hope which gives stimulus to the fibers of the body. It was broken-heartedness—for whenever the nervous system of a man gives out so that he cannot bear up against trouble, and trouble breaks him down, that is heart-breaking. That is the only heart-breaking which there is in this world. The heart itself does not break. It is brain-breaking, it is soul-breaking, it is fiber-breaking, that takes men down.

Now, who keeps account of the useless, or of those who are becoming so? God does. You think of the rich men. I hope that God thinks of them too. They need it. You think of the prosperous men. I hope God thinks of them. They are men. They have the beat of immortality. Who thinks of the men of value? Who thinks of the young men of promise? The politician thinks of them. He wants to use them, and he flatters them, and seeks to manage them. In this work-a-day world, looking on men, we are always in sympathy with healthy blood, and active life, and success. But who cares for the decaying, the down-setting men? Nature cares little for them. Oh, stony-hearted nature, that has in it no feeling; that is relentless; that says, as it lifts its iron arm, "He that comes under my blow falls!"—for it strikes down, and cares little to recover that which it has stricken. Nature has little mercy in it. Who thinks of the poor and the fallen? Society? The most bungling work society ever does in this world, it does when it attempts to be merciful. Society is a machine, at best, of

patches and expedients. Human society is no model for anything but itself; and it groans and creaks in every joint, and is imperfect in every wheel; but it is never so much imperfect at any other time as when it undertakes to compensate the wisdom which God makes necessary in every man for himself. But when men fall out of their places, and need to be tenderly dealt with, then the hands of society are clumsier to deal with them than a lout's, a yeoman's hand, in the field, is clumsy to take care of the new-born babe. Whatever good intentions society may have, the way in which it takes care of the poor and the sick, even when the ministration is committed to those who make mercy the business of their life, is rude. It is imperfect. Oh Grave! thou art kinder than our poor-houses! Let me die—let me never go to the workhouse. Let me die—let me never go to a county hospital. For human society does not know how to be divine; and it never shows to so poor an advantage as when it is attempting to do the works of divinity.

Who cares for the remnants of society; for those that are out-cast; for the sinking; for the helpless; for the mistaken; for those who have failed to accomplish the ends of life, or are failing—who cares for them? God does.

Let us look at some of these remnants. I am sent to preach comfort to such. I am sent to minister to them. I am sent to make known the divine mercy to the remnants.

First, I mention those who are broken in health, and are utterly turned away, by that reason, from all that they sought. Multitudes there are in life who had every equipment, and every opportunity, apparently, but who suddenly broke down and failed, simply because their health had departed from them. For, although men in ill health have sometimes been gigantic workers, as in the case of such men as Richard Baxter and Moses Stuart, yet their ill health was such as left their nervous system free to act, and they were men that worked by brain force. But where the very nature of the breaking down pervades the agent of vitality—the cerebral power—how are men brought into desolation in a moment by the loss of health! They rise up from a fever, and thenceforth life is a wilderness to them. Many a man lies down sick of the measles. All his life was before him. When he gets up again he is deaf, he is half blind, and he is feeble throughout. The future to him in this world is a wilderness.

Do you count how many men are stopped short by the mere fact of broken health? how many men go out of the school? how many men leave college? how many men with the first honors of their profession beginning to blossom on their brow drop out of

that profession? how many men that had all hope of executive success in business are seen stepping down, and down, and down? how many there are to whom life was one great garden of promise, and who came to the gate, snuffed one moment at the odor, and reached out for the fruit, and were stung by a viper? To such, life has ever since been a desert, so that, "Having done all, stand!" becomes the text and motto of all the rest of their life? They can do nothing, because they are broken down; and so they stand still, and will wait till the gate shall open and give them leave to go out hence. They count as ciphers. The only thing they seem to be good for, is to serve as memorials of a mother's patience, of a sister's goodness, or of a wife's fidelity. I think that in this world there are no histories so sublime as the unuttered histories in our households, where men give themselves as really for others as our Lord gave himself for the whole world: not giving so high a nature, not giving in so divine and comprehensive a sense; not giving with a scope which reaches beyond the individual case, and taking hold of the infinities and eternities, as Christ did; but nevertheless, literally living for others.

This matter of bodily infirmity is one that is full of pity and full of sorrow, and infinite in variety. Some men sink and disappear, as a leaking ship founders and goes down. And happy are they. Happy are the dead. The day of many a man's death is better than the day of his birth. You do not know it; you do not believe it; but ten thousand there are, within arrow-shot, or within an hour's walk, of this place, who do believe it. And many men are brought to think of it many times in life. Blessed are the men who go down as a full-freighted ship, after a short struggle, a few silver bubbles coming up where the waves closed over them, as if to tell of the soul's escape heavenward, and that it is all over; but some men are not permitted to go down thus. They are run ashore, out of their element. They are like a ship cast upon the land, where the sun beats upon it, and the heat shrinks it and cracks it and opens the seams wider and wider, till by and by it drops to pieces, and is lost.

How piteous it is to see a great ship lie helpless on the beach! How piteous it is to see that most powerful of all machineries, the locomotive, helpless; on the track, equal in strength to ten thousand men, and off the track, as weak as a babe!

How many men are like a man-of-war, that is staunchly built of the best material, but that on its first voyage is so handled by the winds and waves that it becomes unmanageable, and makes haste to come back to port again, and anchors at the Navy Yard, and is an old receiving hulk for the rest of its days!

How many remnants there are in society of pale folks; sickly folks; people that vibrate and oscillate between light and dark—between sanity and insanity; persons that have aspiration, but no power of generating vitality, so that one day's work causes them six days of sickness! How many there are that lie defeated in life from over-exertion, and are obliged, against their will, to give up? How many there are in the great army of remnants who seem thus ground to the earth!

Then, how many remnants there are in society on account of the misapplication of their powers, and their utter failure therefrom. There is nobody to aim for us; and if men went into life more humble, I think they would go through it more safely. If a man would begin to do the thing that lies next to him—next to his father's house, as it were; if the farmer's boy would consent to learn farming, and the mechanic's son would consent to learn mechanics, and the laborer's son would consent to follow his father's vocation; if all men would begin low down, and stand on ground that is firm, and then go up as they are called by the opening of their faculties, and by their success in life, there would be fewer remnants; but everybody does exactly what the Lord forbids—takes the highest seat at the feast. Men come from the country to New York in order to be Astors or Vanderbilts—nothing less than that; they make a push for that; there are five thousand men pushing together; and in the crowd the weakest will go down. Men come to New York who have read about art. They despise the vulgarities of work-a-day life, and they are going to be artists. They have painted village signs, and pictures that were recognized for what they were intended to be, and they have the spirit of Raphael and Titian and Correggio, and many others, and artists will they be; and they come to this city determined to take the highest seat, without any consideration or measurement or accurate knowledge of what their powers are. They aspire, and follow their aspirations blindly and unwisely. How many second and third-rate men there are who undertake to perform functions which require the exercise of the faculties in their best estate! How many men there are who crowd into public places of trust for which they are not qualified! How many there are that would be administrators, judges, rulers, representatives, although they are miserably fitted for such offices! How many go into mechanical pursuits who have no ingenuity! How many go into scholarly pursuits who have no scholarship, and no thinking power! How many seek the lawyer's profession whom the profession of law vomits out! How many overcrowd the med-

ical profession who have no adaptations for that profession! How many seek to be schoolmasters who need some one to teach them the very first elements of learning! How many seek trades, and professions, and artist callings, and political functions, which are absolutely unsuited to their nature and disposition! Some men who might do well in the shade are found perched up on the steeple-top; and some men who would do better in high places are found nuzzling low down in shadowy places. There are all these misadjustments and mismeasurements in society. It is as if you should put a wheelbarrow in front of a train of cars to draw it, and a locomotive in a garden to carry away the rubbish! It is as if you should set a yoke of oxen to rocking the cradle, and a nurse's foot to plowing! Such misadjustments would be no greater than those which actually exist in society. This man is not fit for this place here, and that man is of no account in that place there. This man is striving to get up there where he does not belong, and that man catches hold of him, and jerks him down, and takes the place.

Some men are forever saying, "Luck always goes past me. Life is against me." There are people who are continually looking on their ill-success, and saying, "Is not providence mysterious?" Providence is all right. Providence does not make any mistakes. Men make mistakes though, as to the guidings of Providence. Nothing is more common than for men to set out for that which they have no qualifications for. And who shall teach them? Where are the men who have the measure, and can take the gauge of a man, and say to him, "Follow this and that?" Something may be done. Wise parents may do something. Kind neighbors may give advice. There is some generosity after all. Men are always willing to give advice; and there is some good to be obtained from the advice of one's neighbors. And yet, there will be this grinding out, grinding out, grinding out of men, because they do not know what they are, nor what they are set to do, and are not willing to do the things that they could do, but are aspiring to do the things which they are not fitted for.

Then there are remnants from the overtaking of men who are adapted to their work, but have not the endurance which their circumstances require. I think the tendencies of modern cities are to heat and rapidity and intensity, and that men will do finer things than they formerly did, but that they will do them at the expense of an increasing number who break down under the strain. Things are tending to consolidate vast factories, and not to distribute smaller factories through multitudes of families.

In Massachusetts, during my boyhood, the making of shoes was distributed among all the farmers of the neighborhood; and when the day's work on the farm was done, and the father and the boys had come in, and eaten their suppers, about seven o'clock, they sat down and "closed up" shoes or boots; and afterwards they sent them to some central point that they might be put together. Now immense factories are erected for the making of shoes, and the work is taken out of the hands of the people, and the factories thrive, and the people starve.

So a few great stores are tending to usurp the places of all the little ones. A few great insurance companies want to swallow up all the little ones. A few great banking-houses like to overtop all the little ones.

The welfare of a nation depends upon its wealth being distributed. When distributed, it is a blessing; but when concentrated, it is a curse. Great wealth in a few places is bad for communities, however good it may seem to the single individual.

Now, in this conduct of society, by which men are overworked, and overmastered by the combination of the few strong ones against the multitude of weaker ones, men's powers fail them. Though they are adapted to certain kinds of work, and though they would succeed in this or that calling if they had the chance to exercise their powers, they are swept out of the way. Hundreds of men, under the strain, break down; and then all is gone so far as they are concerned.

There are some men who, when they break down, are like those who ride in low wagons, and who if the wagon breaks do not fall far, and can get up and mend it, and go on; but there are other men who when they break down, are like those who cross a dark chasm on a high bridge, and who, if the bridge break, fall a great distance into the stream below, and have no power to get back, and repair the damage, and proceed on their journey.

A great many more persons break down from a secret mismanagement of themselves. I have spoken of men's misadjustments, and their overtaxed conditions, in society; but I think that in multitudes of cases the chief and sole cause of men's failures in life—the chief reason why they sift through and become mere remnants, is to be found in their ignorance of how to take care of themselves. This begins with youth. The vital source of supply for life, that out of which every color of joy is to be made, that out of which every element of thought is to be constructed, that out of which enterprise is to spring, that which constitutes genius or industry or success in you, is the cerebral mass, the nervous system—

the brain and the distributed nerves; and he who knows how to keep that mass in health, and fully supplied with right forces; by proper food and proper sleep, and by proper draughts upon it, will have a capital which will grow upon his hands the longer he lives—or until late in life. For insurance policies show that premiums are paid to those who obey the laws of health. A man who is twenty years old has more chances of life than a boy who is only ten years old. A man at thirty has more chances of life than a man at twenty. A man at forty has more chances of life than a man at thirty. A man at fifty still has more chances of life than a man at any age below that. The interpretation of this fact is, that God gives a premium to men for the observation of the great laws of nature, augmenting the chances of long life in this world in the cases of such as are obedient to those laws.

Now, young men want to act upon their feeling. They are for joy. They are for outspring. And I like to see young men full of life and vigor and hilarity. And it is not their racing, or wrestling, or riding, or shooting, or fishing, that breaks them down. It is *leaking*. It is wasting the nerve-substance by pleasures that draw out the very vitality of their life. And thousands of men or ever they have come to the years of their majority, have induced a vital weakness which will never leave nor forsake them till the undertaker bids good-by to their coffin.

I wish you could read the letters which come to me with imprecations and supplications that I would endeavor to save the writers from evils into which they have fallen, as they say, through their ignorance. Woe! woe! WOE! to the men who are secretly wasting that very vital power out of which is to spring all that they are to have of manhood, of hope, of truth and of nobleness!

Then there are multitudes of persons who are as ignorant of how to run their bodies in the matter of food and drink and sleep, as a little child is of how to run a locomotive or a steam engine. Men have no conception of what the mill is that they own—for every man carries a mill. Every man bolts some wheat in it, but few know anything about the process by which it is to be ground and appropriated. We teach men language; we are anxious that they should know grammar and arithmetic; we are desirous of instilling into their minds right moral principles; but as for those elements in them on which grace itself, and the power of acquiring knowledge, greatly depend, they do not feel much anxiety about them.

Now, while I do not yield to anybody superiority of desire in respect to the wise cultivation of the mind, the heart, and the con-

science, I have a very strong sense that intellect and moral considerations have much to do with the stomach, and that persons from over-eating or under-eating, from over-drinking or under-drinking, and from sleeping too much or sleeping too little, destroy themselves, not only physically, but mentally and morally; and I am persuaded that very few men learn the art of so eating and drinking and sleeping as to make their body do the most work, in the best manner and for the longest time. It is not taught in the family, it is not taught in the schools, and it is not taught in our higher institutions to any great extent. It is one of the things which are yet to be developed.

So, many break themselves down in a few years from ignorance on these subjects. I see men who use more wind to waft a cockle-boat across a pond than would be required to carry a man-of-war across the sea! I see men in my own profession who are breaking down from exhaustion. They talk from morning till night. They are very fond of talking, they talk to everybody, and they talk all the time. They spread themselves out; they distribute themselves here and there; they have a word for all who come in their way; they talk sixteen hours daily; and it seems no more trouble to them than the springing of a watchman's rattle. Thus they are continually wasting their vitality. This goes on eight, nine, ten, eleven, or twelve years, and then they break down, and their capital is gone past recovery. If they are remonstrated with, they say, "O, there is no danger. It is very easy for me. I shall not break down;" but at last they find, to their sorrow, that they were mistaken.

A man says, I am worth five hundred thousand dollars; and he puts his hand in his pocket and throws out handful after handful of pennies—small change—small talk; and of course he has followers—everybody has followers who is liberal with his money; and he goes on throwing out a little here and a little there; and somebody protests against his wastefulness, and warns him that he is in danger of ruining himself; but he says, "Oh, there is no fear of that." He has been throwing out pennies a whole year, and his friends say to him, "If you persist in giving away your money as you have, you will certainly come to want." "Bless your soul," he says, "I have more than I know what to do with. I don't feel poor." He goes on throwing out little sums, and occasionally he throws out here a big purchase and there a big purchase—that is, big sermons,—and he does not suspect that his means are running low, till by and by the supply is exhausted, and he says, "I wonder if my pocket has a hole in it?" His money is gone, and he does

not know where it has gone. He goes to the bank, and there is none there. He looks after his stocks and bonds, and finds that they are all gone. He is bankrupt; and he says, "Where under the sun has my money gone to? I haven't spent it as I know of."

This is just the way that I hear men talk who waste themselves, who exhaust themselves by ten thousand little petty wastes which are all the time going on, and which result in the consumption of their nervous energy, their life force. They do not feel the loss; they are strong and vigorous yet; they do not realize their danger; they are absorbed in business or pleasure; and they do not practice any economy in the expenditure of the resources of their being. They waste themselves.

In all these various ways men undermine that great motive power which brings us out of alliance with the mere animal kingdom, and lifts us up into association with higher creations.

The rude brain which is found in the lowest animals increases, as you rise in the scale, and becomes convoluted in the mammals, and is most perfect in men; and in men it is larger, it is deeper and broader, and is more confluent, as you go up toward the perception of the spiritual, the invisible, the infinite and the divine. And that which makes man godlike is the vital, nervous organization that God has given him, in which, or out of which, or by which, works the immortal soul. When men all their life long are ignorant of this, and are all the time wasting and destroying their nerve-force, is it surprising that they fall down in the battle, that they drop out on the march, and sink to the bottom of society?

Besides these who are perpetually breaking down and falling in the rear, are those who violate the laws of society, who are detected, and convicted, and branded with shame. I know that we must have laws; I know that we must have penalties—severe penalties; I know that we must have jails and state-prisons; and in many parts of society, I suppose we must yet have the halter. It is an instrument of the barbarous period; but the barbarous period juts into civilization in spots. There will be criminals, and we shall have to punish them; but we are very ignorant indeed in the matter of the treatment of criminals. I think we have scarcely begun to know how to deal with men so as to bring them back to life and hope. This is another instance of the clumsiness of society when it undertakes to do anything moral, and and to do it well.

I think the most piteous thing in the world is to see a man, no worse than we are, who, under the influence of company, or through temptation, has committed a great wrong, and has been branded by society. His life is not worth anything after that.

For the laws of society are like the laws of a fort, which when a man is inside defend him against all attack, but which when he is outside open all the artillery of the fort upon him if he attempts to get back.

There are men in society whom everybody in the street thinks to be criminal, and yet of whom everybody has a kindly opinion; but let such a one be arrested, let one transgression be fixed on him, and let him be sent to Sing Sing for a year, and when he comes back his life is blotted out. Every man suspects him. Everybody for the sake of his own reputation does not want to be seen with him. Everybody avoids having anything to do with him, saying, "He has broken down once, and he may break down again." A man says, "I must have reliable men in my business." That is all true; but the fact remains that if a man stumble, and break the laws, it is almost as much as his life is worth. It is hard for him to get back where he was before.

This is certainly a warning which should be addressed to the young: You are safe within the law; but you are not safe beyond it, outside of it. There have been many men who fain would have returned again to the established ways of morality, and honesty, and industry; but they found themselves going against the quick-set hedge of prejudice on every side. Many are crowded out into permanent dishonesties; many sink into discouragement; many die broken-hearted!

Many men have a conscience under a prison jacket. There are men in Sing Sing in whose cells I believe angels dwell! There are a great many men that human life disowns. There are many men that have gone into the gutter whom no man will stoop to lift up, whose funeral is attended only by the one man that shovels the dirt remorselessly on his uncoffined body, but who stands in the other life pitied of God, sought for by Jesus Christ, and saved by the Holy Ghost! There are many men of whom it may be said that the first will be last, while the last will be first; for God is more lenient as a judge than we are. God judges with the justice of love, and not with the injustice of hatred. Only love knows how to speak the truth, and to judge with just judgment.

In regard to all those who are in this great struggling mass—the remnants of society—the outcast, the poor, the lame, the maimed, the weak, the sick, the discouraged, the criminal, the vicious, those that are out of the way,—in respect to that great class, I have to say: Take pity on them, have compassion for them, even if that pity and that compassion do not reach beyond their external condition.

We judge of God, and of his interest in us, by what he does in time and in this world; but I bethink me, and remember that God is one that sits on the circle of the earth and shapes the affairs of this world and the other; and that what happens to men in their experience in this sphere reaches on to the other sphere, where God shall deal with them, and build up in them that which they lack here. I should die of despair if I thought that all the men who fail in this world had no God to think of them or take care of them in the world to come. I do not believe that the Gospel of Christ is a Gospel for the strong. I do not believe the Spirit of Christ was a spirit that blessed those who succeeded. I believe it was a spirit that said, "Blessed are the poor," and "Blessed are ye when all men shall hate you and persecute you." The Gospel of Christ was a Gospel that opened prison doors, and brought messages of mercy to those who sat in the region and shadow of death. And if there are not in the church nor in the household any that have compassion on the great waste-class and under-class—on the remnants—of society, I believe there is a God that is sorry for them!

Here is a staggering, dirty, gashed boy. Ashamed his companions are of him. A brute he is, haggard, hated, and cast out of employment. Nobody respects him, and nobody cares for him. Yes, there is a mother at home whose pride has been crushed in his behalf, whose love has been crucified, whose life has been waiting for his coming back; and though he goes year by year from worse to worse, and seems to have touched the very bottom, and to be worthless, love never faileth, still she loves him, and love nourishes hope. And what a mother is to her child, she sinful, weak, imperfect, acting only by an ennobled instinct, that, in an infinitely greater degree, is God to his erring children. If she, to the very last moment, will not give up her boy, but loves him, and excuses him, and waits for him, is there no mother-God looking down upon all the causes that mark human life, and waiting for the poor and the outcast? Is my God one whose heart is like the drum-beat of the tyrant warrior? Is not my God, rather, one whose heart is better than a mother's heart?

To all those who are cast down and suffering, I say, There is a God that is sorry for you. The same compassion that led Jesus Christ to give his life for those who were piercing him with the spear, lives and reigns in the bosom of God. And if men turn you away, if men disown you, if you are cast out from among your fellows, God thinks of you, and will succor you.

Beware, then, of desperation. If God be for you, who can be

against you? Do not throw yourselves away. Do not plunge headlong into despair. If there should be continued twilight, or if that twilight should run rapidly toward midnight in the world, do not be discouraged. Though all else should be against you, God is for you. There is immortality—seek for that. If wealth has failed you, if pleasures have failed you, say not, “My life has been a grand mistake and failure.” Plunge not into the gulf of despondency. There is a future. There is a bright and blessed manhood just beyond. It is not far between the soul here and the soul there. It is but a step. You call it years. They that dwell above call it minutes. You are not far from your Father’s house, where will be interpreted to you the wisdom which you miss on earth; where will be a ministration of mercy which society does not know how to give; where the dormant power that lies undeveloped in you will be brought out by the clear shining of the face of God.

If you have failed for this life, do not fail for the other, too. There is very much that may yet be done, even in the afternoon and twilight of men’s lives, if they are hopeful and active.

There are many men who have not been guilty of vices or crimes, but who by a misapprehension of their powers, and by those casualties which belong to the running of this great unregulated machine of society, have been overthrown—there are many such, who, in old age seem to themselves to have lost influence standing and property. At any rate, there is a sort of letting them severely alone on the part of their old friends. Their hearts are hungry yet, and they feel that there is something that they could do if they only could get at the doing of it. My friends, be not discouraged. Give not yourselves over to complaining and mourning. Stand with patience and goodwill.

When one of my Norway spruces died from the rude handling of last winter, instead of rooting it up and throwing it away, I let the ampelopsis take possession of it, and it grew up rapidly through all the branches of the tree, and covered its top with leaves. And in the autumn, these leaves, which had been green before, were all changed to a brilliant crimson; and the tree in its own life was not half so beautiful as it was when covered by this vine, clad with all the colors of the setting sun.

Are you like an old tree that is dead, and has dropped all its foliage, and stands with its trunk and branches bare? Let faith and love cover you over, and you will be more comely and more useful standing clothed in such garniture than you were clad in all your former strength.

Be patient, old man. Be patient, mother. Be patient, widow

Be patient, you that are impoverished. Be patient, men that are scarcely thought of, and are treading lower and lower. God thinks of you. And it is not a wondrous thing that you should go down the same steps that your Master went. Shall the servant be greater than his Lord? Christ suffered for us all. He made himself of no reputation. He took upon him the form of a servant. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He died a death of shame and contumely for us. And shall we not be able to follow in the steps of the Sufferer, who calls out to us, and says, "Hold your ground, and live. Be patient. It cannot be long before God's angel shall come and then your troubles will be all over?"

Oh, think, brethren—you that have houses and lots and stocks and bonds, and have the solace of pictures and books, and to whom, when death comes, it will be hard to leave these things—think of your brothers and sisters, who have no homes, and nothing to enjoy in this world, and are continually tormented by unsatisfied longings. How glad they should be to leave a world that is so cold and hard to them! And what will their happiness be when their vision is opened to all the sweet delights which belong to the blessedness of the heavenly land!

Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, friends, strangers, has the world gone hard with you? Is it going hard with you? Pluck up your courage. Wait. And if need be, suffer, and suffer patiently, to the end. Let everything go but this: "God loves me; heaven waits for me"; and in that hope stand. Though the world perish around you, *stand!*

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice that thou dost not need our supplication. Our heavenly Father, it is not our voice, nor is it our uplifted hand, that opens thine heart. Thy very thoughts of us are the stirrings within us which we call our own desires; and so it comes to pass that we think of thee because thou hast thought of us. As men in the morning behold the sun that long has looked in at their window, and has wakened them finally; so thou art looking in upon us; and what time we turn ourselves to take thy favors, it is the solicitation of thy favors that has drawn us to thee. And thou hast made it to be our own strength and gladness to draw near to thee, and commune with thee. Yet how do our thoughts come shapeless forth! How few are the words with which we can speak unto thee! How little do we understand thee! The compass of thy nature is so great; thou art so high above us—not in stature, but in the glory of thy perfection; love in thee dwells in such royalty, and flames abroad in such wondrous elements, which we have never thought of, and which human experience has never hinted at, how shall we speak to thee of love—to thee, who art thyself supereminent beyond the thought of our hearts? How shall we speak of thy truth, and the symmetry of thy being, and thy various power, and all the workings of thine infinite nature? Who can think of these things? How shall we draw near to One who is so far above us, so far from us, and yet so near us, and within us?

We rejoice, O Lord our God, that, though by searching we cannot understand thee, nor find thee out unto perfection, we can find out so much of thee as answers to our thought and to our desires, and that we may feed upon thee. We rejoice that we may commune with thee, though we know not what is the greatness—the height, the depth, the length and the breadth—of the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. We go toward the sun and toward the light, and we know them to be bright and warm, though we cannot compass the sun, and though we do not know the sources of the light. Thou art God to us. We know that there is wisdom; that there is truth; that there is everlasting rectitude; that there is love which guides all, and toward that we send forth our thoughts.

We believe in thy thoughts concerning us. Yea, we believe in the manifestation of them in deeds. We believe, also, that thou art bearing witness in thy providence to the things which thou hast spoken in thy Word, and that thou art bearing witness in our own inward experience to the things which thou art teaching by thy providence and by thy grace. And we desire to have a full assurance of faith in thee, if we may not have the uttermost knowledge. We desire to have that assurance of thee which children have of their parents long before they understand what they are, or what is the fullness of their nature. Give to us the childlike heart and clinging arms. Give to us the yearning for thee and the running to thee for refuge. Give us rest in thee. Give us the hope and the confidence that thy love shall be more than our faults and sins; that thy goodness shall be greater than our mistakes; that thy mercies shall outrun all our faults; that by the grace of God we yet shall be made perfect, and shall be brought, in the fullness of Christian manhood, into our heavenly Father's house.

Look, this morning, in great compassion upon all those who sigh for thee; upon all those who need thee; upon all those who cannot help themselves when they are distressed; upon all those who are paralyzed before the causes of evils that are in them or around about them, and who crave the succor of thy presence or the inspiration of thy Spirit. Grant them, this morning, thine influence manifested in them. Speak peace to their troubled

thought. Give strength to their weakness. Grant that they may have hope where it has gone out. Give them courage and fortitude that they may bear the burdens of life, and carry its sorrows, and take all its disappointments, as imposed by the hand of their Father. May they walk as soldiers in the field of battle, filling their place where needed, and full of heroism to endure unto the end whatsoever may come upon them. And so may every one of us learn to bear hardness as good soldiers.

O grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are in the affliction of bereavements; upon all those from whom thou hast taken friends dearly beloved. Wilt thou that hast wept teach them to weep without giving way to despair. Teach them relief by sorrow. Teach them the way to be happy through the way of grief. Give them a truer sense of the purposes of thy dealings with them.

Deliver us, we beseech of thee, from barrenness of thought and feeling. Deliver us from an unsanctified state of mind. Deliver us from hard-heartedness. Deliver us from want of courage, and from despair. Deliver us from untrust, and from disbelief in God. May our troubles be as so many winds that bring us to the harbor, and not as so many winds that drive us into shipwreck and foundering. We pray, O Lord, that we may thus learn to live, not alone by joy, but by trouble; and may we count it all joy when we fall into divers trials and afflictions. Do thy work in us in thine own way. Work out sanctification in those who are called, and call those who are afar off, that they may know their better life, and begin to walk therein. We pray for all that are wandering; for all that are backslidden; for all that have forgotten their vows and their first love; for all that are tempted more than they can bear. O most merciful High-Priest, that hast been set forth as one that pities those who are out of the way, look abroad upon the multitudes who need thee, and die without thy help. We pray that thy compassion may kindle in thy people, and that they may be stirred up to more prayer, and more faith, and more earnest zeal, in seeking to save the lost. We pray that thou wilt fill this place with those who most earnestly desire to walk the higher and better road toward immortality and glory.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all who are laboring in our midst for others; upon all who are giving their time and their zeal for the instruction of the young, and especially for the instruction of those who at home have no teachers. We pray that thou wilt fill their souls so full of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus that they will be to the little ones under their charge gospels and epistles of Christ, and that they may lead, not by word of mouth alone, but by sympathy and love, those who are in their care. So may they become shepherds and bishops of souls.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all who go forth in the byways, and highways, and hospitals, and jails, and prisons, and all places where men do resort far from the Word of God; and may they be filled with a spirit of meekness and great humility; and may they know that it is the Lord that made them to differ from those to whom they go; and may they win men by the persuasion of the Gospel, and by the gentleness and love that is in Christ.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the churches in this city. Ordain thy servants that are in them. Fit them to preach the Gospel of love and salvation. May they seek to reform the morals of the time, and to provide for the poor, and to shield men from temptation, and to rescue those who are tempted more than they can bear. And we pray that they may never be weary of well-doing, inasmuch as they shall reap in due time if they faint not.

We pray that thy kingdom may be spread abroad in all its forms. May the Word of God be distributed from house to house. May those who pity the unfortunate be multiplied, and may they go forth and visit every part of this land. We pray for the gospel of intelligence. May it be diffused everywhere. We pray that the faith of Christ and of immortality may stir men up to develop the manhood of their fellow-men on earth. We pray for those who are abroad in foreign lands, and are doing their Master's work with fidelity, and for all who are doing thy service, wherever they may be.

We pray for those who have been lately emancipated from slavery, and whose children are to stand among this people as citizens clothed with power. O grant that they may not come up bringing with them dark-mindedness and untempered passions. Grant that there may be provided for them the ways of knowledge and of true religion.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that there may be a generous and glorious rivalry among all thy servants, of every name, as to who first and most shall teach those who are benighted.

We pray that thou wilt grant that this great land may have more and more just laws. Grant that there may exist a public sentiment that shall enforce all right principles. Grant, we beseech of thee, that we may see men filled with contentment, with industry, with virtue, and with true piety. May we see them reverently loving God, and loving their fellow men, and striving for things which make for peace.

Let thy blessings, we beseech thee, go forth to all nations; and grant that the time may soon come when the darkness shall be lifted from the minds of men, and when the light of knowledge shall stream in upon them.

We pray for the time of prediction which has waited long, and which still lingers, but which shall yet come. It bears all things onward, and thy Word is sure; but it is not yet fulfilled. How long, O Lord, the ages cry unto thee, how long? When wilt thou round up thy work upon this globe? When shall it be said, "A new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness" are created of thee? Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever more. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our heavenly Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of truth spoken. Is it not the truth of God? Lord, are we speaking wrong when we interpret thy great nature as love toward all thy creatures? Wilt thou not bear with them as men do not? Wilt thou not be greater than men in love, as much as thou art greater than they are in power and being? What is the scope and what must be the flow of infinite love in God? O grant that out of these truths may grow up in us more charity, more patience, more helpfulness, more zeal on every hand. Serve thyself by us; and when thou hast done with us on earth, Lord God of our fathers and of our mothers, bring us home to thine own self. And to thy name, Father, Son, and Spirit, shall be praise immortal. *Amen.*

MORALITY NOT ENOUGH.

"For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.—MATT. V: 20.

This is the key-note of the Sermon upon the mount. It may be said to be the text developed by the foregoing passages. In the seventeenth verse, it is said,

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

To fill up the natural development is substantially the meaning. Jesus defended himself against the imputation of being an invader, or one who came to sweep away the grounds of morality and belief on which men already stood. He came, however, to demonstrate that they were too narrow, that they were imperfect, that they needed growth, augmentation, elevation. It was his business to fulfill that—to clear up, to fill up, the outline sketch which they had received.

Of course, "the law" here, means the law of Moses, not simply as it is written in the five books of Moses but as it existed in the minds of devout men at that time. For the law had grown, by the necessity of things, after the manner of all laws. The Mosaic economy, as it went on down from generation to generation, clustered upon it many things which were not contained in it. New institutions were added to it. And after the Israelites had divided, and the ten tribes had gone off, and the others had been carried captive to Babylon, there arose a sect that sought to observe the law, and to adapt it to the new condition of things. They were the conservatives. They were the most eminent religious men. They separated themselves from the masses where they were, and attempted to keep their class distinct, so that they should not intermarry with the heathen, nor fall into heathen customs. They adhered vigorously to the faith and the laws of their fathers; and so they were separate: they were called "Pharisees." And their

work was a very important one. They had a most useful function among their people.

They came down, however. When years had elapsed, and they had returned to their native land, and new national customs and laws prevailed, their interpretations of the Mosaic law became pragmatical, narrow and intense. The reason why is two-fold. First, they had no conception of a law as being a vital, spiritual thing—the hint or command of an inward state. Their idea of a law was, that it was something wholly external. It was in their estimation a rule laid down; and if that rule was obeyed, they did not ask at all what was the relation between obedience and the inward, spiritual condition of a man.

Now, in the Old Testament it had been promised that if they obeyed the law perfectly, they should become the head nation of the world; and so the Pharisees were endeavoring to obey the law to the last jot and tittle of it, in the hope that they would regain their ascendancy and victory over all the world. And Christ found them the most intensely conscientious of men in regard to external and minute matters of the law. Every single enactment had been studied, and its particularities had been fixed, and the minutest methods of observance had been determined. The Pharisees, and those who followed them, were endeavoring to fulfil the law by the most precise and absolute obedience, in every part and particular of it, as an external rule.

They were to “keep the Sabbath,” for instance. It was necessary for them to determine, to a second, when the Sabbath began. It was necessary for them, not to keep the Sabbath as we now, better instructed, attempt to keep it,—in its spirit, with a large liberty in determining what it is, what are its bounds, and by what methods it is to be kept. They attempted to determine, universally, for all men, the time which was covered by the Sabbath, and what they might and might not do on that day. The law said, “Thou shalt do no work.” But they might amuse themselves and seek pleasure on the Sabbath. They might make it a real jolly day, though they must not work upon it. Therefore, they did not hesitate to meet in each other’s houses, and to have great feasts—only the feasts must be prepared the day before; or else the Gentiles must be hired to prepare them. The Jews ate, and the Gentiles did the work. So the Pharisees managed to evade the spirit of the law, and to keep the letter of it.

They must not work; therefore it was not right for them to reap; and when the disciples were going through the field, and were hungry, and plucked some wheat, and rubbed the seeds out of

the head, and ate it, fault was found with them instantly. That was working. It was the same as reaping on Sunday!

So far did they go that it was determined that men must not wear heavy shoes, because if they did, when they walked on the grass they would tread the seeds out of the heads, and that would be threshing on Sunday; and threshing was work; and work on the Sabbath was against the law.

So, in innumerable cases, and in ways more and more absurd, as time passed on, they treated this law as an external and physical rule.

And that which was true of the Sabbath day was true of everything else. They were not allowed to touch anything that was defiled; and external obedience to the law on this subject was carried to such an extent that it became almost absolute bondage. It well nigh kept them from all social intercourse. Good folks were not to touch bad folks; natives were not to touch foreigners; Jews were not to touch Gentiles; and the minuteness of the idea of purity, as measured by the physical, external standard had come to be so despotic as to make life a prison-house.

Our Master did not reprove morality; "but he said, "Except your ideas of the law are better than those of the Pharisees, you will never enter into the kingdom of heaven." He had said elsewhere, "The kingdom of God is within you." He referred to the spiritual kingdom of true manhood, with the power and liberty of every part of a man in it. He said, "You will never rise into the kingdom of a divinely spiritual manhood unless your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees." You must take a higher view of duty, or you never will reach that higher realm. A true character cannot be developed on a low plane. A character in which the kingdom of God dwells consists of elements which are developed by those who are living in a higher range of inward and spiritual power.

The Pharisees, then, were rigorous moralists. They left out the whole living spirit of right conduct. They omitted the inward love of right. This is what we call spirituality. It is something which belongs to the free will. It is something that does right on account of a tendency of the spirit to do it. It is spiritual life. It is the life of a man's own free interior self in distinction from a compulsory life imposed upon a man from without.

This will lead us to ask, What is morality? and, What is necessary more than morality?

Morality, in its most general sense, signifies compliance with rules of conduct such as are laid down by society, in the form

either of express laws or of universal acceptance, which we call *public sentiment*. Public sentiment is equivalent to law. It is far more searching than law. It is far more influential, usually, as well as far more comprehensive.

Society demands that every man shall, to a certain extent, obey the laws which respect his own body, in so far as the welfare of the community is concerned. No man is considered moral who lives in such a state of rebellion with the laws of his being that he is in an abnormal condition. Therefore, although a man may be within the bounds of civil and criminal law, society pronounces him immoral if he lives so as to overthrow manliness of character and usefulness.

All vices—all deceptions, all excessive rivalries, all waste of time—are considered immoral. That vice of society which is considered immoral is a violation of certain great laws of the body which public sentiment holds men amenable to.

Also, the laws which regulate social business, and the prosperity of neighborhoods, come within the bounds of morality, or of express laws by which men are restrained from trespassing on each other's rights, and kept from impairing the liberty, or the happiness, or the prosperity in any way, of their fellow men. All acts which disturb the general peace of the community, and all criminal acts—these are contrary to the code of morality.

Then, there are implied laws besides these—what may be called laws of good citizenship and good neighborhood. All those things which make a man an agreeable neighbor or companion are necessary, to a certain extent, to what we call morality.

Where men, therefore, justify themselves in the absence of true spiritual religion, they are accustomed to say: "Well, I am a good father; I am a kind neighbor; I attempt to be just to all my fellow men; and I am reasonably industrious." Under such circumstances they recognise the laws of morality, or the lower form of moral laws which regulate conduct.

All the laws which regulate the transaction of business, commanding or forbidding certain things, come within the scope of what are called the laws of morality. Thus, the laws of the land demand that a man shall be honest in his actions. It does not go any further than that. It never considers the motive, unless it be the motive of the outward action, where there is a doubt concerned. Honesty, truthfulness under certain conditions, fidelity to obligations, sincerity in the relations of men with men—these are a part of morality, and a very important part. Regarding human society as a structure made up of individual men, you scarcely can

put too strong an emphasis upon the importance of those moral laws which regulate the conduct of citizens among themselves. Without them, barbarism would return in a generation.

Besides these are civil laws, or those which prevent men from injuring the structure of society, and those which compel men to perform certain necessary duties to society—duties which are needful for its preservation.

Thus you see that the circuit is wide; but, wide as it is, it is a circuit of laws which have respect to man as a creature of time, as a creature of civil society, and as a creature who has relations to certain external things, rather than to any internal condition. It undertakes to say that a man who lives in a household, in a neighborhood, or in a State, and experiences all the benefits of law, and all the advantages which come from traffic and from intercommunication among men, shall perform certain duties toward the household, the neighborhood, and the State, and shall be forbidden to do certain things for his own selfish gratification or advantage which would injure the neighborhood, and household, and State. It is a code of laws having respect to outward life and to the actions of men, in the main, though not altogether. In the main, it disregards men's motives, and has reference to their obedience in their lower relations, as creatures of time, in human bodies, and especially as members of a great organized society.

As such, morality is of transcendent importance. As a scheme of life, however, and as a scheme of character, it is not so important. Indispensable as morality is to the existence of society, when you come to look upon it as a scheme for the education of the individual inwardly, it is very deficient. It shows itself not to have been adapted to that, nor to have been framed for that. It is outward. It is coarse. It is largely pragmatism, having relation to things rather than conditions. It is deficient in motive—in inspirational power.

For example, a man may keep rules and laws which are imposed upon him without one particle of love for rectitude.

“Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

It is possible for a man to have a system of righteousness, to have a system of right living, which is not at all dependent upon the love of right living. It is not because he is benevolent or wishes well that he lives right: it is simply as a means to an end. It is a mere machinery.

Now, no man can develop a true manhood who does not love the things which he does. No man ever does anything that marks

him as masterly except it be done by a certain inspiration into which the whole soul enters. A man that paints, hating his business, never is an artist, and never can be one. A man that is a teacher, and hates teaching, making drudgery of it, can never be an inspirational teacher. A man that is a true workman in any sphere must work by a stimulation which comes from the actual enthusiasm of loving the thing done. A man that obeys moral laws without loving them is like a man who walks within the walls of a penitentiary.

A man at Sing Sing says, "I have been here ten years, and there are very few saints that are better than I am. I have been here ten years, and I haven't broken into a man's house. I have been here ten years, and I haven't smashed a bank, nor robbed an orchard, nor fought in the street. I have been here ten years, and I have done nothing that is not regular. For ten years I have got up at just such an hour. For ten years I have eaten my breakfast regularly at such a time. For ten years I have had my industrious pursuits measured out in just such a way. For ten years I have stopped work every day at a given time." For ten years he has been as regular as the rules of the penitentiary compelled him to be. But does he like it? There was not a day when he would not have liked to kick the penitentiary and its rules into perdition. It was the stone walls that surrounded him, and the iron-shod keepers that watched him, that led him to live with such regularity.

So men are hedged in by the walls of society; and they are restrained by its laws in precisely the same way. They do as much as they dare; they go to the edge of laws toward violation; they are all the time seeking how they can evade the laws in their spirit, without breaking them in their letter; and they consider themselves law-abiding men, because they have not broken over the laws in their outward form; and they say, "We are moral." Yes, you are moral; but in what sense are you moral? You have conformed to the laws, not from any goodness that is in you, nor from choice, but because it was policy for you to do it.

Why, if not to steal is a sign of honesty, then stones are more honest than men; for they do not steal even as much as the soil does. If negatives are virtues, the dead are masters of virtue.

Piety means something more than simply observing laws, or not violating them, as the case may be. We are sent into this world to build a kingdom. That kingdom is a kingdom of thought and sentiment, of vitality and virtue. Piety is the power of a new life in the soul. That is the end and aim in life. Morality bears about the same relation to this that shoes and clothes do to human society. They are very necessary, but they are very subordinate.

A man may use laws, not as an incitement to a nobler life, but as a ring within which he may indulge evil. Nothing is more common than that. For no laws can be made so minute but that in the changes of circumstances which are constantly occurring, men may find the means of doing things which the law intended to prevent. Men may do evil under the cover and protection of the law. So that one may be technically moral, and yet all his life defrauding his neighbor. A man may be technically an obedient citizen, and yet all the time violating the spirit of good citizenship. A man may take the shell and husk, and not the kernel and meat. A man may be moral, and yet void of all that spirit which it was meant that he should have even in this lower sphere.

You have occasion to observe men on every side of you whose study seems to be how to indulge forbidden passions and appetites, and how to do it in such a way that no statute can touch them—that no law can reach them—that no chastisement can follow them. A man may be moral according to the ordinary acceptance of that word, and yet void of all sense of character. Thus, a man may be a moral man according to the higher sense of that term, and lack every particle of generosity. A man may be moral, and yet void of benevolence. A man may be a moral man, and yet utterly free from any such spirit as that of gentleness or lenity. A man may be moral, and yet thoroughly ungood. A man may be a moral man, and yet be such a one as nobody would want to live with, as nobody would sympathize with, as nobody would revere, and as nobody would honor while living, or mourn when dead. A man may keep the laws of society, and yet maintain in himself supreme selfishness. A man may keep the laws of society, and yet be intensely stern and proud, carrying his pride so that it does not knock the laws over, but so that it is indulged in every other way. A man may be a moral man, and yet be as avaricious as miserism. A man may be moral, so that no magistrate shall find fault with him, so that no officer shall suspect him, and so that no wrong shall be imputed to him; and yet he may be stingy and corroded with meanness.

Morality does not make manhood. But nothing is of great value that does not result in making manhood higher, and goodness more fruitful. And no man shall enter the kingdom of God without high emotion; without divine sentiments of faith and hope and love; without joy in the Holy Ghost, which begins in the individual, and extends itself through the bounds of the universe. No man shall enter the kingdom of God who is but techni-

cally moral. *Except your piety be higher than mere morality, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Morality, then, does not create manhood. It may be under the dominion of the worst passions. A man may be moral, and be as bad as he can be in this world, absorbing pleasure from all that are around about him, and inflicting pain on all that are near him. I think it is true that sometimes bad men are better than good men are, in a given sense. Certainly that was the meaning which our Master conveyed when, looking at the Scribes and Pharisees, he said, calmly and quietly, "You think yourselves to be models of piety; and if there is anybody in this nation that you perfectly hate, it is a publican." Why did they hate the publicans? Because generally they were Jews—renegade Jews; because they collected taxes for a foreign government; because they turned against their own countrymen, and fleeced them, for the sake of supporting the despotism of Rome; and they were hated on the side of patriotism. Here was this band of apostate Jews, here were these renegades, who were making their office odious by their extortionary conduct; and our Master said to these Scribes and Pharisees, "The publican shall enter the kingdom of heaven before you." That was said to men with long robes, and with a most immaculate exactitude of obedience. They searched the law. It was familiar to them. They wore it on their person. Some parts of it were written on their brow, and other parts were sewed on their garments. All manner of services brought it to their mind. They were precisionists to the last degree. And yet, Christ said to these men who abstained from ten thousand things that they wanted to do, and who performed a hundred thousand things that they did not want to do, "Those odious tax-gatherers are better men than you are."

How could they be? It was bad enough to be a tax-gatherer; it was bad enough to lie under, and to yield to, the temptation to be extortionary; it was bad enough to be in the service of a foreign, intrusive government; but for all that, the man who was so bad may have had a generous streak in him; he may have had a tender heart; he may have had an aspiration which constantly rebuked him; he may have had a sense of self-condemnation; he may have been conscious of doing wrong all the time; and there may have been a growing resistance in his conscience to the course which he was pursuing. There may have been in him great workings, great brewings, great fermentations, great yearnings, a great many excellent thoughts, a great many tender feelings, a great many virtues; and Christ, looking upon him, externally accursed and hated as he

was, had compassion on him; and, turning to the other man, whose face shone with ceremonial purity, or whose external life was exactitude, but who was inwardly as a ravening wolf, avaricious, envious, hateful, hating, suspicious, bitter, and, above all, inordinately conceited, and almost without human sympathy, and wrapped up in self-gratulation, and eaten up by it—turning to him, and looking on him, Christ denounced him, so far as inward character was concerned, as worse than the culprit publican. He was a monster of scrupulous morality; and the Master said to him, “The publican and the harlot shall enter the kingdom of heaven before you.”

These are very solemn utterances. They are not extravagances. They were not said in moments of excitement by some heated speaker. They are calm declarations of a Man who needed not to be told what was in man.

One may be outwardly proper, and may be obedient to the laws of the land and of the neighborhood; and yet he may have within him such malignant dispositions—such envy, such jealousy, such hatred, such selfish exclusiveness—that God, looking on him, shall say that he is worse than those who make less pretension to goodness, and who are condemned as bad. Not that these others are not bad; but he is worse than they are.

Finally, morality has in it no element of spirituality. It has no sense of duty toward God, and no provision for the life to come. Its relation is confined exclusively to the visible and sensuous realm of life. A man is a creature of two summers. He roots and sprouts in one, and blossoms and bears fruit in another; and no system of procedure can develop true manhood in one who is without the higher spiritual horizon. This world is not to be disconnected from the other world. It is necessary that while men are here in the present life they should have a wise foresight of the life which is to come. Our character on earth should be developed with reference to the character which we are to have in heaven.

That which Christ says, then, is that morality is not enough. He says, not that it is good for nothing, but that it is insufficient.

What, then, is that more which is required? It is required, first, that all secular laws shall be obeyed in the spirit of love and justice—not compulsorily. They should be obeyed because of their spiritual and beneficent relations. There is many a man who falls short if he is judged by this standard. There are many men who pay their debts, but who do not do it for the sake of justice. There is many a man who fulfills his neighborhood duties, but who does not do it in the spirit of neighborhood kindness. There is many

a man who pays his taxes for the support of the government, but who does not do it in the spirit of patriotism. It is by compulsion that he does it. It is fear that impels him to do it. He does it because not doing it would involve greater suffering than doing it. He does it hating to do it. There is no freedom or willingness that goes with his obedience. A true man is one who does right because it is pleasanter to do right than to do wrong. A true man struggles against wrong, until it is easier to do right than to do wrong. No student has learned any lesson who has to think when he recites it. No man has done anything perfectly so long as he has to think how he shall do it. No man has learned a thing until he has converted voluntary into involuntary action. No person has learned to walk so long as he is obliged to exert his will in walking. No person has learned to read if he has to spell every word as he goes along. No one has learned figures who has to go through the whole process of ratiocination on every smallest problem—as I do. The process must become involuntary—inspirational.

Do I, when I walk along the street, say to myself, “There is an old man approaching, of eighty years, venerable, grey-haired, who has served his country; it is proper that a young man like myself should pay respect to age; and therefore when I get where he is I intend to bow to him”? And when I get where he is, and pay my respects to him, do I think, “I will salute him with agreeable salutations, so and so” and pass on? Have I learned courtesy, if, in doing these things, I set out to do them in my mind? You are not well-bred if your courtesy is a thing to be thought of. You are not learned in courtesy when you have to think about it. Courtesy is thoroughly learned only when it comes unthought of, spontaneous and irresistible.

No man who has to struggle to be kind has learned the law of kindness. Kindness shines with a steady, unintermitted blaze.

No man is obedient to law in any direction who has not accepted that law, and made it a part of his will; and who does not, in obeying it, obey himself. The reason that you speak the truth, is that you love the truth. The reason that you do not cheat your neighbor, is that you love honesty. The reason that you do not commit burglary, is that you abhor it. No man is obedient to law so long as he acquiesces in it by reason of force. Every man ought to spiritualize his morality, and raise it to a higher level.

A man's own development and perfection should be the supreme end toward which all lower influences tend. Self-seeking—not in the selfish sense, but in the spiritual sense—that self-seeking which tends to bring us into the image and spirit of our God, who is our

exemplar in Jesus Christ—such self-seeking is right. There is a vast overplus in this matter of obedience. More is due from you than any law requires. When you have fulfilled the commands of the laws of morality you have not come to the measure of your capacity and power. The law of duty for every man is an inward law. According as you have received must you give. Of him that had one talent, of him that had five talents, and of him that had ten talents, the Master required the use of one, five, and ten. It was required of each man according to what had been committed to him.

Now, no man can measure his duty by the laws of society ; for the laws of society put all men on a level. They cannot do otherwise. But God, in giving you his commands, recognizes the fact that some have more capacity than others. Every man must take his laws of duty and character from what he has in himself ; and he must do it with the perpetual understanding that his obedience to those laws is to go to excess, rather than fall short of what they require. Self-excusatory natures, who are asking all the time, “How little can I do of what the law requires without reaching its penalty?” come short of their duty. True men are those who act from a plenary inspiration, and who do right to the utmost of their power, for the sake of the right itself, and to please God. A man is not a full man who goes only as high as the laws of society require him to go. A full man is one who, when he has done what society requires of him, puts as much more as he can upon himself. A man must be as just as society requires him to be, and then as much more just as he is capable of being. But can a man be more than just? Yes.

Take another quality. A man must be as benevolent as morality requires him to be ; but he can be more than that, a great deal.

Our Master, in one place, says, “Let him that giveth give with simplicity,” and in another place he says, “Give not grudgingly, for God loveth a cheerful giver.” So benevolence is not only being willing to give, but it is giving with gladness. Many persons give their gifts as one landlord gives stale beer, not with a sparkle or bubble on it, but flat. Other persons give their gifts as another landlord gives beer that foams, and every particle of which is pervaded with fixed air. (Beer is good for illustration if it is not good for anything else ; and in that sense I will use it.)

How do men give? It is often from a sense of shame. It is the fear of loss of reputation, frequently, that impels the gift. Charity is often dragged out of a man. We shut a man up, as

it were, in the house of his excuses ; we put a reason here and a reason there, like so many constables to keep him from running out at the back door ; and when we have him thus secured, we go in and push him, and push him, and push him till by and by he surrenders, gasping, like a man overcome in a fight, and says, " Well, well, I give up." Under such circumstances men disgorge ; and afterwards they call it " charity." They give grudgingly ; but *the Lord loves a cheerful giver*—a man who, when he gives, makes the gift fragrant with his manhood, so that it shall be a pleasure of memory. We know what gifts are in our holidays and in our social interviewings, where they become souvenirs or objects of memory. We know the difference between such gifts and those which we make for public uses.

Tell me, my sister—you that have been collecting money for the Orphan Asylum—do you like collecting ? You that have been collecting for the House of Industry—do you like the business ? Is it not mostly like drawing water from a deep well, and having nothing to draw with ? You that are trying to take care of the homeless and the wandering ; you that keep open a mansion for working women ; you that are attempting to serve the most sacred causes of morality and humanity, as you make your rounds, what is your experience in respect to the law of benevolence ? As you go from place to place, is it not a rule that to collect gifts for such purposes is the most thankless of tasks that anybody can perform ? Do not people give grudgingly ? Do they not give narrowly ? Do they not give meanly ?

I would rather a man, when I go into his house to ask for money would button up his bull-dog pocket, and say to me, " Get out of my house ; I won't give you a cent !" than entertain me, and discuss the matter ; and then tell a long string of lies of this, that, and the other thing, and finally land me, with a complimentary lie, outside of his door, without a dollar ! Rudeness is bad enough ; the process, however, is summary, and is soon over ; but unloveliness, meanness, wickedness under the forms of benevolence, justice and truth ; the absolute want of manhood in the performance of duties—these are things that bid every man beware. You have not fulfilled the law of mercy when you have merely given an external adhesion to it. You must fulfill it with a willing heart, which not only sends the blessing for the sake of the thing done, but sends it also for the sake of pleasing yourself.

Why is it, do you suppose, when an artist sits down to the piano, and fingers the keys, that he shrinks every time he strikes a certain string ? It is because that string is out of tune. Well, what of it ?

It hurts him. If you were to hit him on the head, it would not hurt him any more than the discord which is produced when he strikes that key hurts him. It goes against the sense of music that is in him.

Now, a man should be so attuned to every moral element that it hurts him when there is a discord between any one of them and the others. If a man does a thing that is grossly out of taste, we feel that. There are certain bold incongruities in life which we notice. But that which we recognize in a few elements of our experience ought to run through our whole career. Every man's being should be so keyed as to be pleased by the harmony which comes from right-doing, and pained by the discord which comes from wrong-doing, in every path and line of life.

Something more, then, is required of us than merely living so as to take care of our own characters in this world. There is the present, and there is also the whole sweep of future immortality in eternity; so that no man can live a full and right life who is not fulfilling the requirements of two spheres, as far forth as they are coincident, at the same time. It is the animal that lives for to-day only. It is the man that has prevision. The animal is absolutely stolid. Every true man is a prophet. The animal dwells where his feet are: the man where his thoughts are; and to these are given wings to fly far above storms, and out of the reach of bounds and marks into the eternity of God. But no man can raise himself to this altitude of conception and education and feeling of manhood, who merely fulfills the external requisitions of society. You must have the inspiration of God.

In view of these remarks, I would say, first, that I would not be understood as undervaluing morality. There has sometimes been a style of preaching which was so emphatic as to the importance of change of heart or spiritual regeneration, that it seemed to throw morality under its feet; so that men have frequently gone away from church, saying, "There is no use of being good if it does not amount to anything."

Now, I am far from saying any such thing as that. I believe that it is good for one to be good in one degree if he cannot be good in more than one. If there are twenty degrees of goodness, I believe that it is better for a man to be good in two, and leave out eighteen, to be good in three and leave out seventeen, or to be good in four and leave out sixteen, rather than not to be good at all. A little, in the right direction, is worth achieving. Just in the ratio in which a man goes in right directions, right is profitable. It has in it a certain remuneration in life. It has in it certain germinant tendencies and probabilities, which give hope of reward.

All these higher sentiments stand on a root of morality, as morality stands on great physical roots. Although morality is not enough, it is the foundation of that which is more and better when it is grown. As every fruit-tree must have its roots hidden in the dirt, and yet bears its blossoms and fruit on its topmost boughs ; so men who are bearing spiritual fruit on their topmost boughs must have, underneath their trunk, roots that stand in the ground, from which, in the present life, their nutriment flows.

I would say to a man, if he is not a praying man, Be abstemious ; be self-governing ; be truth-speaking ; be honest ; be right-minded. Morality, as far as it goes, is an admirable acquisition. It is not enough ; but because it is not enough would you not avail yourself of it ? Because a man has not wealth, is it therefore not worth his while to have a competence ? Because a man has not a competence, is it therefore not worth his while to keep the little that he may have ? As far as it goes, property has value, though it may not reach to a man's desire or necessity. And so it is in respect to moral attainments. It is better for a man to stand coldly within the bounds of morality, than not to have even as much as that.

But it is poor ; it is meagre. A man should not live in a hovel when he can live in a house. A man is not content to live in a house when he can live in a mansion. And no man, I think, would live in a mansion when he could live in a palace. So no man is living rightly or honorably who demands of himself no more than morality requires. No man has fulfilled his obligations until he has the germ of goodness in him, and does more than is required of him by his neighbors and by the laws of the community. We regulate cold customs by cold customs. The law prescribes what a man shall pay for the transportation of goods, and no man is called to pay twice as much as the law says he must. If he fulfills the requisition of the law in such matters that is enough. But when public sentiment requires that you should be a merciful man in your neighborhood, and mercifulness in that neighborhood has had a very low type of development, you are not a true man when you say, "If I am merciful up to the custom of this neighborhood, it is all that should be expected of me." You should be merciful up to the line of your possibility. All that you can bring out of your development is required of you. More than morality requires—all that spirituality requires—is demanded of you. No man can be safe, and no man can have in him the germs of eternal life, who has not had a quickening which is divine, and which comes upon the soul from the contact of the divine Spirit. When we rise above the animal life, the secular life, the economic

life, and enter upon the spirit life, we build with higher elements, and depend upon more subtle conditions. I think the experience of every man who has attempted to live a godly life is, that he must live by faith of God ; that there must be a divine warmth, a divine light, and a divine prompting, by which he can find his way in the unaccustomed paths of this higher living.

When, therefore, I say, "Ye must be born again, and born of the Spirit," it is not to draw a contrast between necessary morality on one side, and spirituality on the other : it is to give, founded on morality here, a development of those truths which shall bring you, by divine apprehension, into the presence of God and holy beings.

You need the divine influence to show you, to strengthen you, to help you. No man can of himself become spiritual-minded. No man can come to God except the Spirit draw him. Do you ask, then, "How am I to blame?" The Spirit draws eternally. The Spirit draws every man, day by day, by ten thousand suggestions ; by ten thousand influences that are generated in society ; by a thousand influences that come to us from nature ; by a thousand social influences ; by all the influences of the sanctuary ; by the revealed Word of God ; by that word of God which is constantly being unfolded by the divine Providence ; by the dealing of the Spirit ; by that whole round and realm of life through which we are being made either better or worse ; by that divine inspiration and guidance which is leading us upward and onward toward spirituality ; and by that care which is fitting us to be citizens of the New Jerusalem.

Stand in your integrity ; but do not, in your conceit, say, "Integrity is enough." Stand in the simplicity of good citizenship and right-mindedness ; but do not vulgarly say, "These are enough." Possess yourselves of these lower virtues ; make them more and more eminent ; give them branches, and make them more fruitful ; but remember that high above all the requisitions of this lower estate there is a Father's house where you are to dwell ; there is a God with whom you are to be ; there is a spiritual life into which you are to enter. It is not enough that you are fitted for this world. Where is your fitness for the other world ? Where is your fitness for that life which is to come ? When all your property is gone, and all your pleasures are gone, and all your industries have ceased, and you have passed through the grave, and the door is opened into the heavenly kingdom, will you be qualified to enter ? Have you the spiritual culture which will fit you for that upper sphere ? Are you fitted for the society of the just ? Are

you fitted for the companionship of the spirits of just men made perfect? Are you fitted to dwell under the searching eye of Him who is purity itself?

Beware, then. Be good as the world demands that you shall be; but add to your virtue spirituality. Repent of evil. Take hold upon good; and, above all, by the help of the divine Spirit, live in it until you are transformed and prepared for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, that thou hast not made our approach unto thee conditional upon perfect purity and perfect obedience. Who, then, of all thy creatures could come? We do not draw our children to us because they are full and perfect. From their infancy we have respect to their weakness and their need; and thou art, also, most merciful toward us, and dost draw us unto thyself with permissions and promises and great grace, not because we are deserving, but because we are needy. And thou lovest us, and art healing all our trouble, and preparing us for perfection in the life which is to come. We thank thee for thy compassion and thy tender mercy. We thank thee for the expression which thou hast given to us of old, and which thou hast fulfilled from generation to generation in those that have served thee. We thank thee, O Lord our God, that thou hast made thyself accessible to our thought and to our faith. Though thou wilt not be discerned by the senses, and cannot be, thou hast raised up a power worthy of thyself to dwell among us. We begin with that; we discern it; and through it we come to have a sense of thy presence, and to have faith to enter into communion with thee. And yet, is it not a vain show? In nothing doth it appear what we shall be. All our steps of knowledge toward thee are but shadowy. But they shall come forth in a knowledge transcending any imagination. Now, all that we understand falls infinitely short of that which is real. Thou art more glorious, thou art purer, thou art more merciful, thou art more gentle, thou art more beneficent, thy presence is more full of joy and gladness than it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive; and we rejoice that we shall not wait to be disappointed in thine image, but shall be satisfied, and filled with unutterable wonder. And if we look back upon the state from which we have passed to our higher home, we shall marvel at the wisdom and grace which bore us through its shadows and misunderstandings and mistakes, and prepared us finally for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

We pray, our Father, that thou wilt grant to us more and more a sense of our dependence upon thee, and of our need of thy inspiration and guidance. Every hour wilt thou make us to watch; and watch thou over us. Grant unto us the cleansing influence of thy Spirit, and the indwelling of thy Spirit, that we may repel that which is evil. Grant that we may not live according to the pattern of those who are around about us, but that we may take our model from thee, and live by that which is highest and most truly sublime.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant to all that are in thy pres-

once this morning, blessings, as they severally need. If there be any who have burdens, may they look up to the great Burden-bearer of the universe. May they cast their care upon Him who cares for them. May they not, from day to day, come with their trouble to thee, and every day bear it back again. We pray that thou wilt teach us to cast our cares *finally* at thy feet. May we be willing to abide by that which seems to be best in thy sight, crying, from our innermost soul, Thy will be done.

We pray that thou wilt comfort any who are in the midst of sorrows and fears, and who are swept hither and thither by storms, real or imagined. We pray that thou wilt grant to them that love and trust which cast out fear, so that they may be enabled to await the providences of God with calmness and resignation.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all those who have been disappointed in life, and whose ways are burdened and embarrassed. May the Lord have them in his holy care and keeping. Grant that they may not feel that they are so much impoverished by reason of that which is outwardly lost. May they have that inward treasure, that treasure in heaven, by which their hearts shall be raised far above all the storm and all the confusion of this mortal life.

Be near to all those who are tempted. Deliver them out of the temptation by which they are beset, and bring them forth into the clear and peaceful light of a comfortable hope.

Be near, O Lord, we pray thee, to those who are weak and in the midst of trials. Lay thine hand upon them, and strengthen and encourage them.

Grant, we pray thee, that thy servant appointed to minister in holy things, and those who are around about him, as they have been by thy providence deprived of their place of worship, may be gathered again in thy providence, and strengthened to all hopefulness, and industry, and fidelity.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thy blessing may rest upon this nation, upon the President of these United States, and all that are in authority with him; upon Congress assembled; and upon the Legislatures of the different States. We pray that equity may rule. We pray that more and more the passions of men may be subdued, and that righteousness may prevail throughout all our borders.

Bless schools and colleges, and all seminaries of learning. We pray especially that schools may be established among those who are outcast, and are most needy, and are neglected in their need.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt grant that the prosperity of this nation may not make it avaricious or haughty, and that it may not break over the bounds of restraint by reason of the goodness of God to it. We pray that it may be temperate and self-controlling; and that it may have compassion upon the weak; and that the light of its example may shine, in truth and equity, upon all those nations that are seeking to break away from their shackles, and are striving to gain that liberty out of which shall come intelligence and true liberty.

Wilt thou be pleased to guide the nations! May wars cease among them. May all those mighty influences that are evil and that tend to evil be checked. Wilt thou preside over the counsels of men! And in thine own good time bring forth the predictions of thy servants of old. For thou hast promised that the whole earth shall see thy salvation, and that the day shall come when men shall learn war no more. Make haste, O thou that dwellest in the peace

of thine upper sphere. Grant unto us peace in our time, O Lord. Deliver us from all thrall of bondage which is inconsistent with our best good. So lengthen out our days, and so mete out to us the allotments of thy providence, that when at last we depart, it shall be with an assured hope, and with an inward preparation for thy heavenly land. And there we will praise the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we thank thee for all that thou art doing, and for all that thou hast done. We rejoice that thou hast so ordained life that he who lives in the least things right, is by that very right-living led on to higher things. Nor have we any rest ; for every unfolding which gives more to our being demands yet more ; and the obedience of yesterday gives a higher law for to-day. So we go on. As the trees that unfold every year, more and more widening their scope, and lifting themselves higher, so dost thou augment our being, and with its augmentation our duty is augmented. We thank thee that we are not like the ungrowing stone, or like the dead stick ; we thank thee that we are expansive. And we rejoice that we are tending toward the infinite. May we behold our birthright. May we separate ourselves from those that are below us of the animal creation. May we, by faith, and hope, and love, begin to have winged power. May we live, not as seeing visible things alone, but as seeing the invisible.

Help the helpless. Help the discouraged. Help those who are out of the way. Call the deaf till they hear. Raise the dead unto life again. And grant, we pray thee, O Lord our God, that there may be multitudes out of this congregation who shall be called from a lower to a higher life ; from a vulgar and selfish way to a nobler and enduring way, in the holiness of God.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

UNCONSCIOUS INFLUENCE.

“Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least, the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits : and they were healed every one.”—ACTS v. 15, 16.

I do not pretend to go into any analysis or explanation of this miraculous power which belonged certainly to the apostolic age. I do not, either, pretend to say whether it has analogies in our own time, nor whether it belongs to a part of the scheme of nature, and is an obscure, undeveloped power, which certain persons have yet, or may have, and from which, perhaps, by and by, in another age, may be brought forth marvels which shall be equivalent to the early ones. These are speculations out of which we are at present unqualified, or out of which I, at any rate, am unqualified, to bring any practical result.

I perceive that in the apostles' day there was this power, and that certain fruits flowed from the exercise of it. I perceive that while at first voluntary and exerted by the apostles with conscious will and purpose, it was in many instances also involuntary, as it were, overflowing, acting without the consciousness or the volition.

You will recollect that not a dissimilar instance occurred in the life of our Saviour, when he was going to perform a miracle in the house of Jairus. He was touched by a woman in a great throng, and she was instantly healed. Although he had, as we have reason to believe, no consciousness of her act until it was performed, he instantly felt that virtue had gone out of him. The apostles are represented—Peter especially—as being so filled with this curative power that when they brought to him great multitudes, thronging the streets, they were healed. They were placed so that his very shadow should fall on them ; and that seemed to have the healing power.

In Paul's case, we find in another place that they brought handkerchiefs and articles of dress, that he might through them give forth healing virtue.

I have selected this passage, not so much to speak directly of the historic fact, as from it to derive instruction concerning what I may call *unconscious influence or power*. Here was the apostle who had gone forth purposed to heal men; and one by one as they were brought up he commanded them to stand; and they stood whole. Thus he exerted a conscious and voluntary power. But as he passed along the streets, his shadow fell upon many, and they sprang up behind him, he knowing little or nothing of it; so that his shadow or unconscious influence, also, was working at the same time:

Now, all of us have both kinds of influence, or power—that which we understand and mean, and that which falls like a shadow, the existence of which we do not understand nor recognize.

Men are surcharged with power. They are not recipients alone. They are susceptible of influence. Men give forth power one upon another; and human life is an endless scene of giving and receiving—of interchanging cerebral influence, in thoughts and feelings and actions which are but the interpretations thereof.

Both these kinds of influence are at work on every hand, and all the time. In the vast mixture of human affairs there are these intersphering powers—the direct, intentional exercise of force, and the indirect and unintentional exercise of force. Human life in its mighty conglomeration is made up—in what proportions we can scarcely tell—of these two great influences.

The importance of voluntary activity in human affairs, I need not indicate to you. You are not likely, in this stirring land, and in this enterprising age, when men are stimulated so that over-stimulation is the very vice of the times, to fall into the evil of want of activity. It is the root and spring of all commercial business. It is the foundation of all real development in education. It is that secret marrow and element from which the wise and just administration of government proceeds. It is the spring from which comes all wholesome enterprise. It is that which stirs up men, and prevents stagnation, and the vices which it breeds. It is the inspiration of art. It is that which inspires and develops man. It is intended voluntary activity, in thought and feeling, carried out into practical life, that is the secret of the movement of the ages. And men are far more in danger of over-estimating than of under-estimating it. In oriental lands, where a kind of passivity exists, and a sort of fatalism broods, men need to be taught

the profit of enterprise ; they need to be stirred up ; but in our more western lands, we need far more to have the other side presented to us—we need to be taught that all intentional voluntary activity carries with it an unintentional and involuntary activity, into the nature of which we do well to inquire. Men who are energizers are apt to forget all except that which they mean.

Men may, in the first place, act unconsciously in the production of trouble, far more than they themselves suspect, or will admit ; for their unconscious influence works according to the quality of that which is in them. When men pursue voluntary courses, they often hide the reality, and put forth that which is not real but simulated. Thus, perhaps, one makes himself friendly to a person whom he does not like, for purposes of business. Sometimes men suppress anger because good-nature will carry their purposes better. So that a man's overt and open conduct may not be in the line of nature, and may not be in the line of force.

But there is an influence derived from the reality that is in you—from that which you actually are. It does not depend at all upon your hiding or showing, but it has its own methods of acting, and of making itself felt upon the consciousness of men. From the nature of your character you may act in a malign sphere without intending it—without, at any rate, intending that others shall know it.

For example, a man, being of a very proud nature, and intending well enough, may carry himself in such a way that every one he meets is made to feel his inferiority ; so that every man he meets is conscious of having a certain arrogancy thrown upon him. A man may carry himself in such a way, he may so speak or look or act, that without the slightest intention of doing so, he shall insult his fellow-men, and make a perpetual aggression upon them. In this way a man may do harm without intending it. Your pride does not always exert itself according to your will. It has a magnetism of its own.

A man may carry in his hand, if he please, a mignonette, and he may carry it because it is sweet. He may also put fetid odors in his clothes. He may hide them, not wishing that others shall know that they are there. But they will make themselves known, whether he wants them to or not.

So a man may carry himself in the strong qualities of his nature, wishing well ; but if those qualities are harmful in their tendency he will produce mischief in spite of his good intentions. His dominant faculties have a way of their own, quite independent of his will.

A man's selfishness may act as good conductors of heat do. If you go into your yard, and put your hand upon a post of wood, it seems relatively warm ; and if you put it on an iron fence, it seems excessively cold. They are of the same temperature, as measured by the thermometer, only the iron, being a good conductor, has the power of drawing heat rapidly from your hand, while the wood, being a poor conductor, draws it but sparingly. One seems warmer than the other, owing to this difference in the power of the two materials to conduct heat from your hand.

So it is with men. Some men exhaust you, they suck you dry, and you know not what is the matter. Others inspirit you, lift you up, and help you. A man may have a nature such that when you are in his presence you are perpetually conscious that your sympathy is drawn upon and exhausted. He is a good conductor. His effect upon you is to chill you. And he does not intend any harm. He sits in the midst of the company supremely selfish. Unconscious selfishness always works in that way. Every man around about him is more or less fleeced and robbed by his unconscious disposition. And this disposition cannot be hid. A man may be consciously selfish and not half so offensive as a man whose selfishness is never positively aggressive, but who carries an inward nature that all the while and everywhere draws upon men, making the whole room and house uncomfortable : never showing itself in any one thing, but pervading the atmosphere, and keeping everybody restricted and chilled, keeping everybody conscious of unhappiness, and yet ignorant of the reason why. Some men are like a sponge, in their influence upon their fellow-men in life. They have qualities which suck up all that can be drawn from those around about them. Porous beings of selfishness they are ; and when we go into their presence we sit shivering.

So, combativeness may take on forms which will detract from the happiness of every one. The more obvious forms in which combativeness acts—namely those of violent outbreaking—bad as they are, probably, if measured by the mischief which they work, would not be found to produce one half the discomfort of society which arises from the latent forms of combativeness—what we call ill-nature ; a low-toned irritable impatience. It hovers in the air. It is in silence as much as in the short, sharp reply. It stirs everybody up, and keeps everybody uneasy. Sourness, moroseness, peevishness—these carry a chill all around about them.

There come to us moist, clammy days, with the east wind, from the sea, which seem to suck more heat from us than cold days when the thermometer is below zero. And so people—not bad

people, but people who are under the dominant influence of combativeness in all its shapes—produce great disquiet and discomfort wherever they go. If you ask them, “Do you mean to make men unhappy?” they disclaim it at once; and if you charge them with having made men unhappy, they deny it instantly, and say, “I never lifted a finger; I did not do a thing; I am not responsible for what I do not intend.” Yes, you are. A man is responsible for his unconscious as well as his conscious influence. He is responsible for the temperament which he carries about with him in the affairs of life, so far as it may be a matter of restraint and development.

So men oftentimes fill the circles in which they live with malign influences. They poison the air with suspicion, with envy, with jealousy.

And it is not necessary that such a one should point out a single person to be laid open to suspicion. It is not necessary to point out the traits of this or that person to the advantage or disadvantage of other people. A look, a hint, a shrug, may convey the wretched insinuation; or the unconscious atmosphere of jealousy make itself felt. A nature that is inclined to do these things more dangerously affects us than almost any other, because it unsettles our faith, and our charity, and our radiant good-will. And little by little, it brings men down to its own terms and conditions. So that one person living in a house, with a suspicious, envious and jealous disposition, is oftentimes enough to sour the dispositions of a whole family.

I may mention, also, the unconscious wrong which sorrow commits upon those who are about it. Sorrow is not a thing to be controlled altogether. Certainly, it is not a thing to be rudely criticised. There are times when sorrow must have its own way, even though it cast its dark shadow over bright faces. All this may be true, and yet we must exhort men to beware of the extremely selfish tendencies and qualities of sorrow.

You have a right, as far as you can, to lean on sympathizing friends, and so relieve your sorrow; and men should help the sorrowful; but, after all, no one has a right to eke out his sorrow. No one has a right to distribute, to spread, his sorrow; to cover the young with gloom, to carry twilight into the household; to use his sorrows in such a way that others shall be depressed under the influence of them.

This is true, too, in the matter of ill-health. Invalids are privileged persons; but they should not privilege themselves. Because one is sick, he has no right to set aside all laws of love, and

disinterestedness, and honor. There are no times in the world when persons ought to be so thoughtful and self-vigilant as in times of minor sickness. What may be called major sickness is that which transports us beyond the bounds of self-control. All those forms of illness, then, which are within the realm of self-control, should be subject to Christian conscience and the law of benevolence. Parents, masters, men of strength and power, teachers, employers, may have such an exacting disposition that everybody around them is kept on nettles. It is one thing to hold persons to a regular system. It is another thing to be perpetually criticising. When you have laid down reasonable rules, you have a right to draw men to those rules, and keep them harnessed in them ; and that usually can be done without any mischief or harm to the temper ; but an exacting disposition—one that is minutely spying and questioning, and holding up men to sharply exacting obedience here and there—that quality, which I fear I do not need to define any further, which most of you see somewhere, and, I am afraid, practise sometimes—such a disposition is the cause of much discomfort and unhappiness. It puts on the form of criticism ; and men say, at every step, “ I am right, and they are wrong ;” but it violates the great law of love, and diffuses discord, and is oftentimes the source of more frets and envenomed feelings than almost anything else.

Men's good qualities, even, may act unfavorably upon other men.

Let not your good be evil spoken of, may be applied to dispositions. For example, a man may be a perfectly upright and conscientious man, and yet carry his conscience in such a way that it is perpetually condemning men, holding up before them a standard which they cannot aspire to, and so taking away from them all quiet and sense of happiness.

There is also a kind of arrogance of goodness. There are persons who, by temperament, by early education, or by circumstances, or by all of these together, through divine grace, are lifted above the common infirmities of men ; and if they hold this in a sweet unconsciousness, and are humble, it is a source of great happiness all the time, to others as well as to themselves ; but deliver me from a person who never does wrong—and *knows* it ! Deliver me from one whose tongue never makes any mistakes—and keeps account of that fact all the time ! If there be anything that is provoking to a poor sinner—and most of us are poor sinners—it is one of these perfect people who move about without much temptation and without much oscillation, a perpetual rebuke to us all the time—a kind of stinging censure to our infelicities and inferiorities !

I do not believe in swearing : and yet I understand exactly what Theodore Parker meant, when he said that he never liked Washington till he heard that he swore. It broke the charm of that stateliness which Washington had, and let in the light of human infirmity. There are many people who carry themselves with such a kind of wax-like and artificial perfectness, that a sin would very much redeem them, apparently. In other words, it would take away that kind of hard, cold, self-righteous aspect which they carry about with them, and would bring them nearer to the level, and so nearer to the sympathy, of common humanity.

Turn to the other side—that of unconscious influence in a good sphere. If the predominant faculties are sweet and gracious, then you will carry with you, all the time, a sweet and gracious atmosphere, so that while you are doing good on purpose, you will be doing more good without purpose.

When the sun travels over the continent, ere long it will certainly ripen all the orchards which men have planted on purpose ; but it will ripen, too, all the nuts and fruits on the countless acres that men know nothing of. The summer's sun will take care of the farmer's corn and wheat ; and so it will take care of the infinite variety of seeds which nestle in the grass and on the ground all over the uninhabited territory of the continent. The summer's sun will work with the worker ; and it will also work where no man is. It is the patron of the city, of the village, of the country, of the wilderness, east, west, north and south, in the valley, and up and down the mountain-side. Everywhere the sun is bringing forth abundant fruit. The summer is ripening all things that are for man, and beast, and bird, and worm, and insect.

So men go forth. They are almoners of God's bounty in the things which they mean ; and if they be large, and rich, and ripe, they are also almoners of the bounty which they do not mean, and of which they are not conscious. They shed abroad their influence on every side of them, and enrich all that are near them.

One who has trained himself to a steady and ample benevolence, to kindness of disposition, over and above specific actions ; one who has ripened himself so that he is serene, and sweet, and well-wishing, and admirable in all the elements of his being—such a man carries with him perpetual benefaction. There be men whom we might almost wish to have walk up and down in the street, in order to shed abroad their disposition—unconscious to themselves, perhaps. There be those who are beautiful, throwing themselves into the attitude of grace and beauty, and who are conscious of it ; and

yet there is a beauty which does not know that it is beautiful—and that is, perhaps, the more beautiful. So there is goodness that means to be good ; and there is a great deal of goodness, which is better yet, that comes out from the eye, from the lips, or from the pores—I had almost said, from the skin—and that is not conscious of being good. And when one dwells in such a royal bounty of kindness and goodness in himself that his very shadow, falling on men, makes them happy, that unconscious kindness and goodness is wealth indeed.

I may mention how much contribution men make in life of things which cost them but little, or need cost them but little. There are a great many men who bless society, and are recognized as blessing society ; but there are a great many humble workers in society who bless it, and are not recognized.

When the train is stopped, you shall see the engineer spring off from the locomotive, and, with his long-necked can, oil the machinery at every point, so that the oil shall run in at all the joints. We look at him and at the engine, and admire them. But we never say a word to the oil, or about it. And yet, the engine, and what it does by its strength, are largely dependent upon the lubrication which the oil brings.

Now, there are lubricators among men, who keep the machinery of society oiled, so as to prevent its joints from wearing, and its journals from heating. He is a lubricator who introduces great improvements in the processes of society ; but there are men who prevent the friction which would otherwise be produced by its working. Such a man I consider one who is thoroughly good-natured. A man who carries a disposition that is characterized by thorough good-nature, tends to make others good-natured. Other people take from us what we carry to them ; and if you go in an irritable mood to your breakfast, you will probably find another person who is irritable over against you ; and the irritability will be there because you carried it. If you are cold, those around you will shiver. If you are good-natured, men will be apt to know it, and to respond to your good-nature. Men are as much perceived that carry good-nature in society, as spice-wood is that carries sweet odors. God bless good-natured men, and multiply the number of them ! There is no danger of there being too many men who are not easily irritated, who look on the bright side of things, and who tend to solace—men that you can cushion on, and not touch the hard angles of an exacting, conscientious spirit—men who, in ship, or house, or store, or shop, are so sweet that they suggest the more genial, the kindlier aspects of human life.

I would not have all the world good-natured. I would not have good-nature to be the only and supreme grace ; and there is no danger of its being so—not the least. But where there are so many other sterling qualities, we need lubrication. And blessed are they that move around about in society so as to lubricate it. There are many such who are not conscious of it.

A man goes home from his business at night, and sits down by the fire, and, summing up the transactions of the day, says to himself : “ Well, I am afraid I have not done anything to-day. I failed in seeing men that I meant to see. It does not seem to me that I have accomplished much.” Oh, yes, he has. The very moment he went into his store in the morning he met John, and said a kind word to him. He asked after his family. John was down in the mouth. His child was sick, and he was afraid it was going to die ; but when the man came in with such a genial, gleeful spirit, and spoke to him so pleasantly, John felt better ; he felt better all day ; and he went home at night feeling that the child was not going to die after all. One of the clerks is in great perplexity ; something has gone wrong in his accounts. He is afraid that the case is so bad that it cannot be arranged ; but the man says he guesses it will come out all right, and takes hold, and straightens the matter, and the clerk is at ease again, and says, “ What a comfort it is to have a man that is kind about you !” He also noticed the poor apple woman on the corner, and spoke a good word to her, and put her in a comfortable state of mind. And on the boat he spoke to one and another and another, and had some kind and genial word for each. And so he went on through the day, shedding his influence on whomever he met in his round of varied duties. It is a great comfort just to look at a man who is good-natured.

I remember once riding from Franklin, in Indiana, on a cold night. I was chilled. I was so cold that I almost feared that I should freeze. After a while, I came across a blacksmith’s shop. I saw a bright, shining light on the forge. Logs were burning and smouldering there, and sending up their red flame. I was so cold that, to tell you the truth, I cried. I wanted to get off and warm myself, but I was afraid that I should be so numb that I could not get on again. So I sat and looked at the fire a moment ; and then I said : “ Well, I feel better just for looking at you,” and rode on. I did not freeze to death—you may be interested to know !

I have seen persons whose very presence, when the night was dark, and the way was difficult, and all things were freezing cold, filled you with comfort and hope. There are thousands and thou-

sands of times when men want to be thawed out. Men have power enough, but it is frozen. Men have energy enough, but they need sympathy. Men have good stuff in them, but they want something to inspire them. Men need that which shall be to them what a hone is to a knife. And there are men who are supplying this element to those who lack it, without knowing what they are doing. Many men are, I suppose, redeemed from death by a word. Many men are shot along the way of encouragement, and made to triumph, by some man who never dreams that he is doing anything for them.

It is a good investment to have good-nature, and so much of it that you exhale it, as flowers do their odors ; for you do not know who will take the comfort of it, though there may be hundreds and thousands that you never heard of who will be recipients of the blessed influence of your disposition. Some of you, however, I am afraid will never have the joy of knowing that you have done anything of the kind.

So, too, there is great inspiration and comfort in hope, and in courage, and in humor, and in wit. Because wit and humor have led men into frivolous pleasures, it has been the fashion with some persons to discredit them. But I think that among the gifts which have been made to humanity, none, in the lower sphere of virtues, should call forth our thankfulness more than the gifts of cheerfulness, and wit, and humor. They civilize life. They carry with them a perpetual blessing. If any man have buoyancy, if he find himself given to wit, in the name of Heaven do not suppress it. Multiply the drops which spring out of that precious fountain. There is life in it.

How painful it is to see persons who take everything on the point of hard reality. I see a great many housekeepers who take everything on the side of care. Every day there are things in their experience that strike on hard, sharp points. They do not know how to meet life. They take everything with pain and difficulty. And what a blessing it is that some things seem funny to men ! What a blessing it is, too, that there is a comical side to things ! for mirth almost invariably works with benevolence. Humor and mirth work with the moral sentiments, and not with the malign feelings. They tend toward the spiritual and the divine.

Some men do not suppose there is mirth in heaven. I do ; and I do not know how men read the Old Testament, or the New, either, if they do not find mirth, and the utmost upspring of joy, to be taught there as the inspiration of religion. And where did these come from ? Who made them ? What is the foundation

of them ? Where is that great fountain from whence all those elements have sprung which now make human life what it is ?

Blessed are they who naturally are inspirers of hope and courage ; who lend themselves thus to the weak, and defend the defenceless ; and who do it without complaining, unconsciously and abundantly, every day. There are great treasures laid up for some men. If thanks are music, there are some men who, when by and by they go to heaven, will be greeted by choral strains for the good they have done, for the hope they have re-illuminated, and for the good-nature they have inspired, of which they were not conscious while they were upon earth.

Still more are trust, devotion, humility, where they exist in such a degree that they exert themselves unconsciously upon men, the best inspiration of faith, and the best teaching of religion. I suppose we think more of what Christ was than of what he said or did. That is to say, his actions and teachings seem rather to have been digested and incorporated into our thought of his character, and we look back upon him, not so much as a talker and actor, as a perfect person. He always seems to me as one with a shining face. He always seems to me as genial, and gentle, and loving, and winning. None go near him without feeling the sanctity of his presence. None go near him without feeling inspired toward good.

And so while we do and teach, our best work is that which we perform without knowing it. Silence under provocation is better than doctrine, to many and many a man. Fortitude under trouble is a testimony to religion which is far better than a thousand proof-texts. Devotion, humility, love, and trust in God when all things seem failing—these are powers indeed ; and they who have these supreme qualities of religion scarcely need to teach doctrine, since they are themselves realizations and fruits of the highest doctrine, and of the noblest endeavors.

Once more. As men are unconscious of how much harm they do, and of how much unhappiness they unwittingly cause, so they may do a great deal more good than they think ; they may do a great deal, intending it ; but no man ever works boldly and strongly and whole-heartedly, but what, I think, he does more without knowing it than he does knowing it.

It is not what you say to your class, teacher, that measures the influence that you are exerting upon them. If you be faithful, if your heart is in your work, it is not that of which you can make statistics in the social circle that measures your influence there. Far more influence comes with activity than is shown by the immediate fruit of that activity. The shadow of Peter worked just as

much as Peter's body itself worked ; and genuine men and women work both by substance and by shadow—by purpose and by unconscious influence. There be many who mourn the want of opportunity, and yet endeavor to conform to the disposition of their Master, and to carry themselves through life wisely and well, who will wake up by and by, when they stand in the presence of the all-revealing Eye, with sweet surprise and adoring gratitude, to see how much more, after all, their life meant than they themselves thought.

In your boyhood, as you will very well remember, you used to write with invisible ink ; and there was nothing for the recipient to do but to take the paper and hold it to the fire, and straightway out came the message.

There is much writing with invisible ink in this world. There is a great deal of trumpeting activity. There is also a great deal of activity which does not report itself to the senses, but which is powerfully influential—namely, a godly life ; patient continuance in well-doing ; attainment in humility, fidelity, truth ; standing faithful to the end in the place where God has put you.

You cannot tell what you are doing. No man can tell it to you. You are writing with invisible letters on thousands of children's hearts ; on the hearts of passers-by ; on the hearts of friends and neighbors ; on the hearts of those whom you meet in every circle where you move. There are a thousand influences radiating from you in your life-time which will bring forth their seeds abundantly in the kingdom of God's glory.

May we, then, have such substantial qualities of Christian manliness, may we have such large-heartedness in good, may we so restrain pride and selfishness, and all malign and ill-omened passions, and so give prevalence to the sweetness of love and the bounty of benevolence, and to all that is hopeful and courageous, that our whole life shall be a benefaction to those who never recognize it here, but who will recognize it by and by, when they are our companions in the kingdom of God's glory.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, not as to one that needs to be instructed, our Father, in our want. Before we knew ourselves, thou didst know us; and our wants are discerned afar off. And thou hast commanded all thy messengers—the sun in his time, and all things, and every law—to supply the needs of the living creation. And thou art giving to all an abundant supply. We rejoice to believe that thou art. Super-eminent above all thy works art thou; and though we cannot conceive nor measure thy being; though thou art more than a man, or than a man can think; though our thought cannot fly to compass thee, thou art in majesty so great, and so great in glory: though thou art larger and better, and transcendently higher than any conception which we can form, yet we feel thine influence, and are drawn toward thee. We know thee as a taper, though we cannot see thee as a sun. We know that thou art Love, though love in thee transcends any human experience. We know what power is among men; but what it must be in thy nature we cannot understand. Yet we rejoice in that which we do know. We rejoice in it as they that watch in the spring rejoice in the summer that is coming on, and whose footsteps are felt and seen, although the fruit still lingers by the way. They are glad, and so are we. Though we see thee as through a glass darkly; though we see thee through our infirmities, and misconceive of thee; though we leave out the glory, the plenitude, the grandeur of thy nature, which is far beyond our containing measure, yet we rejoice in that which is visible, in that which is potential, and in that which comes to us, and dwells within us.

Accept our thanks, O Lord our God, for what thou hast made us; for what thou hast given us; for all those gracious influences which have surrounded us from our childhood. We thank thee for our parents; for their early instruction; for that way in which we walk by reason of their influence; for home; for all the blessed associations which are connected with it; for our early companionships; for our entrance into life; for our labors therein; for the fruits which we have reaped in years gone by; for the experiences which we have had in life; for our trials; for its weariness; for its heart-sickness; for its sorrow; and for its very anguish. These have all been, in thine hand, instructions; and by them we have been made wise and strong. We recognize thy power, which has borne us on, and preserved us in the midst of temptations and dangers.

We rejoice, O God, that thou hast hidden from us the future. It contents us that thou dost know it altogether. And we leave ourselves in thine hand, believing that thou canst do better for us than we can ask or think. Grant that every day we may bear within us this contented mind—this faith and trust in God. Grant that we may believe, and that our believing may take hold of the far-off and innermost heaven. There may our hope be as an anchor, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil. May we not trust what we can see, nor rejoice in that which appears, but place our dependence in the invisible, in thee, in thy kingdom, in all thy gracious influences, and in all thy words of promise and of hope which thou hast shaken down from thy heavens upon us. Grant, we pray thee, that thus we may rejoice in darkness and in light, in sorrow and in joy, in weakness and in strength, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, being

steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Look compassionately upon thy servants who are gathered together to-day. Forgive their sins. Search their hearts, and bring forth all that which is evil in thy sight. Shine thou upon them with the light of thy countenance, that they may trust in thee, and turn from whatever is wrong, and have a consciousness of that peace which God gives to the forgiven.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who have come hither weak, and conscious of their weakness, asking strength of God. Be with those who are in doubt and perplexity of mind. Open the path before their feet, that they may be able to walk therein firmly, trusting in God, and leaning upon him as upon a Saviour. May those who are in darkness find thy light and thy consolation. Be all to all. Be thou light ; be thou medicine ; be thou bread ; be thou strength to the weak ; health to the sick ; comfort to the distressed ; eyes to the blind ; feet to the lame. Grant, we pray thee, that thine abounding mercies may be dispensed to all, so that every one shall feel that he has been called of God, and has had at his Father's table, this day, a portion of the divine bounty.

We pray that thou wilt bless those who labor in our midst—all teachers ; all that are working for the outcast, the poor, and the neglected. Abundantly grant unto them the divine influence, that they may not alone bear the letter of instruction, but carry the spirit of Christ, and all the deeds of Christ with them.

We pray that thou wilt raise up friends for those who are friendless. We beseech of thee that thou wilt favor those who seek for the purification of morals ; for obedience to law ; for the prevalence of justice ; for intelligence throughout our land ; and for the spread of true religion everywhere.

O that the day may come when men shall learn the lore of love ! How long shall the passions bear sway ? How long shall men live by that which is lowest and least in themselves ? When shall they feel the heavenly inspiration, and by thought and nobler sentiment live divinely ? Let wars pass away. Let superstitions pass. Let sins pass. Bring in the latter-day glory. Grant, O Lord, that speedily every nation may know thee and thy laws, and in obedience find full fruition of joy.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless us in the word which has been spoken. Grant that all of us may take heed to its truth. May we seek to live in such a reality, may we seek to be so manly in the essential qualities of a true manhood, that whether we mean it or not, our hearts shall be perpetually filling other men's hearts with kindness, with helpfulness, with courage, and with good impulses. Give us of thine own nature. Dwell in us. We are helpless. We sprang from the earth. We aspire toward heaven. Grant that we may have a heavenly influence perpetually drawing us thither. And when thy work shall have been completed in us, and thy purpose in us shall have been wrought out, give us joyful dismissal, that we may fly away and be at rest. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.”—Eph. iii. 17-19.

The sacred Scriptures teach us, from beginning to end, the existence of a personal God, of such a nature that we may draw from ourselves a true—although it be a partial and diminished—idea of God. We are taught that there is one supreme God : although existing in three Persons, yet one God. And we are taught that this is not diffused, latent, universal being, but that it is being in the same sense in which we comprehend it among ourselves. We are taught that it is a present God, as separated from all other existences, and as made up of intelligence, and will, and emotion, somewhat after the manner of ourselves. That is, we are so far like God, that we can form some conception of the mode of divine existence from our own—though not all of it, nor the highest part, nor the best.

The Scriptures make emphatic declaration of certain great moral constituent qualities which inhere in the nature of God, and which constitute its supreme glory and beauty and desirableness. Central among these is the great quality of goodness, or benevolence, or love, whichever term you may choose to designate it by ; and from this central, this mother element of the divine nature proceed all other qualities. That is to say, they are enwrapped in this supreme goodness, and take their quality and direction and use and nature from it. So that justice, and patience, and wisdom, and righteousness, and all other qualities of this kind, are products or inflections of the one great central divine element of Benevolence or Love.

Emphatically, however, the Scriptures declare that man can attain, in searching for this great Father God, to but glimpses—to

only partial views. We are nowhere encouraged, in the Bible, to suppose that we can know God as we know each other. Although our knowledge of each other is very partial, yet it is comparatively rounded out ; and we know each other in such a way that we separate one from another. We analyze, we discriminate, we individualize, through long ranges ; and the knowledge which we have of men is sufficient for all the purposes of business or of pleasure—for all purposes of intercourse.

Now, there is in the Scriptures no holding up to our conception such a knowledge as this of God. When Moses asked that he might have a knowledge of God, in order that he might lead and instruct the people, he was told that it was impossible that any one should see the fullness of God and live. Only a part of God was to be disclosed to him, and that not the highest part.

“ And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty.”

This great revelation of God as loving that which is good and right, and wrapping it round about with infinite patience and forbearance, was a disclosure made to Moses. And it was not a complete disclosure. It was called merely a side view, and not a full face. “ Canst thou, by searching,” it is boldly asked, “ find out God ? or understand the Almighty unto perfection ? ” The whole book of Job turns on that very idea of the impossibility of man’s compassing by his reason the whole nature of God, or his providences, and the meanings of them. And Paul, the most rapt of all the apostles, declares that our knowledge of the other life, and of its contents, compares with the reality very much as a child’s dreams about manhood compare with the realization of manhood when one has grown up. He says distinctly, “ Now we see through a glass darkly.” He taught that the future was dim and imperfect as seen by us here.

The arrogance with which men have taught the precise limits of everything in God ; the intolerable cruelty with which men have insisted that the government of God should be exactly so defined, and that the administration of that government should be precisely so believed, and that the nature of God should be exactly so accepted, is in wonderful contrast with these majesties of Scripture which declare that we may know God for comfort, for strength, for wisdom, for guidance, and for final salvation ; but as to our knowing him in any degree which is commensurate with the qualities of his being, that is impossible. He transcends all human capacity.

The reason why God is not revealed to us perfectly is simply this, that the faculties of men limit the disclosures which are made to them. You cannot make any disclosure to a man for which he has not a faculty. Whatever quality or attribute lies beyond and outside of the faculties which are in a man, cannot be revealed to him. Nor can we go beyond a certain amount of comprehending power in conceiving of quantity. Neither can we go beyond certain experiences in conceiving of quality. A knowledge of these things turns on what we are ourselves.

Tyndall has shown in his lectures which have been delivered so often, happily for us, and are being delivered again in this city, that the beams of light which come from the sun contain a great deal more than our eyes can detect; and that when we come to measure the scale, there is unquestionable evidence that there are beams in the light of the sun which lie outside of any power yet in our eye to catch and determine them. He, moreover, hints that the Darwinian epoch may yet come, when the eye will develop itself up to the power of catching those as yet uncatchable rays.

You cannot, by the senses, understand anything that does not lie within the scope of their power. Imagine a man that had but one sense, and that the sense of seeing. What could he know, by putting a trumpet to the eye, of the sound of that trumpet? Imagine a man that had no eyes, but only ears. What could he know in respect to microscopy or telescropy, or any instrument of vision? The ear cannot be made to answer the purposes of seeing. All the truth which comes through the ear must lie within the bounds of that sense; and all the truth which comes through the eye must lie within the bounds of that sense.

It is not to be supposed that our five, or seventeen, senses—whatever the number may be which we have—comprise the extent of the universe in respect to all matters. It is not to be supposed that we are the highest range of beings that are in existence. And if there are to be added one, two, three, four, five more faculties, and there are things the knowledge of which is to come naturally through those faculties, we cannot understand those things now, because we have not the senses, we have not the door, the portal, the window, through which they are made known.

Now, that which is true of our physical senses, and which we recognize as true, and which enters, as an axiom, into philosophy, is also true of faculty—for there are faculties just as surely as there are senses. There is something behind the eye, and something inside of the ear, which we call mind. Whether it be matter, or whether it be spirit, it is there, in its own proper nature and func-

tion. And the same law which obtains in regard to our senses obtains in regard to the mind. You cannot interpret to a man a quality the faculty for comprehending which is wanting in him, or is dead in him. We recognize that in every-day life. It is impossible for some men to understand each other. If you were to select a man of great purity, and great gentleness, and great kindness, and great benevolence, and great goodness, and great nobleness of nature; if you were to take a model man, and bring a savage, hot from Africa, into his presence, do you suppose that anything but a miracle could strike a knowledge of this high man into that low man? Most certainly not. And why? Because he has not himself the quality by which those things which exist in the other man can be understood. For when we say "Love," it does not mean anything to a man who has never had love, any more than if you said some other unintelligible thing. When I say "Love," if you have felt it, you know what I mean, and if you have not, you do not know what I mean. When I say "Courage," if you have had courage, you know what I mean; but if you have not, you do not know what I mean.

A man has in him what may be compared to the chords of a musical instrument. Only such sounds can be produced on a musical instrument as its chords are adapted to produce. You cannot understand anything which is not, in some form, and in some degree, a matter of experience in you. So that it is true that men are outside of each other. Men who live in their basilar, animal faculties, having all their moral sensibilities dormant, cannot understand men who live in their spiritual and supersensual nature.

Take a man who owns a dog-pit in New York. All his pride is centered in black-and-tan terriers or bull-pups; and his idea of sport and of life consists in the breed of some dog that he has, and in the pluck that is in him, and in the number of rats that he can kill in a minute. He talks all day and all the evening about these things. It is his joy and pleasure and pride to win; and when the dirty, nasty contest comes on, nothing thrills him with such ecstasy. Now, take Mr. Bergh and that man, and put them together, what a nice time they would have! Do you suppose they could understand each other? There is an absolute incompatibility between two such natures. I might multiply instances, but one is enough.

Men, therefore, who give their whole life to the production of suffering, are not able to understand men who give their whole life to the assuaging of suffering and the making of happiness. In

other words, we understand each other by likeness of tastes, or by the rebound in you of something in me which tells you what I am. If there is no rebound, there is no use of interpretation. You cannot cipher me out, as you would cipher out a sum. A mother could not understand her child if there was not something of the mother in the child. There is the yeast of one man in another, or else there could not be raised in him a conception of that other. Such is the law by which we are governed in comprehending each other's nature or experience.

One step more. When we examine the operation of men's higher faculties—those which are furthest from physical life; those which are latest developed; those which have appeared in the race latest; those which we call the product of civilization and religion—when we examine the operation of these higher faculties, we perceive the presence of a different law of evidence from that which prevails in regard to the lower faculties. When we undertake to judge of the qualities of matter, and bring our lower and physical faculties to bear upon them, there are certain processes by which we evidence facts or existences to ourselves; but when we apply the other part of our mind—our higher faculties—to knowledge of other kinds of truth, we are conscious that they act under a different law, or in accordance with a different state of facts.

For example, if you wish to know how many marbles there are in a peck measure, you can sort them out and count them. You can separate them, and estimate their number. Wishing to know the contents of that peck measure, you count out a thousand marbles, and you say that there are so many. And you have found out that fact by the application of a physical faculty—the sense of number. But suppose a man should put in your hand a music-book, and ask you to give an opinion of the music in it, could you count it? Is it the province of arithmetic to interpret music? You are conscious that another faculty comes to you when you undertake to judge of music; and the moment you are asked what the music in that book is, you say, “I must hear it before I can answer your question.” It is not music to you until you hear it; and when you hear, it is not music to you by any process of reasoning. You cannot tell why it is music to you. A person at the piano strikes one set of chords, and they give forth a certain sound, and you say, “Don't!” Why do you say so? For no reason except that it does not agree with you. It hurts you. But another set of chords, struck, produce a sound which is sweet and agreeable to you. When some tunes are played your whole soul goes out to them. Music has a faculty of its own. That faculty knows by

intuition what is music, and accepts it. There are many people who have this faculty in low measure, and recognize the smallest kind of tunes, which have little of music in them, but much of sentiment. The words help them to like the tune. And as you go up so that you touch the faculty of music in its productive element, you see that that faculty acts by a different law of nature from that by which the processes of arithmetic are carried on, or from that by which solid qualities of matter are separated, are analyzed, are determined.

It is a standing jest, that some person read Milton's *Paradise Lost* to a mathematician, who said, "Well, what does it prove?" As if the best poetry had to prove something! As if it appealed to the reasoning faculties! As if it did not go above men, and behind them, into another court!

Snapping cloth as they do in stores, is, I suppose, a good test; for I see that they always do it. They put a piece of cloth on the counter, and snap it; and I snap it, too; but I never know what it is for—though to those that are expert I suppose it is a test of the quality of the goods. But suppose you should go into a crockery shop and apply the same test? It is wise enough in judging of cloth; but how foolish it would be in judging of fragile commodities!

All through life we apply different modes of evidence; and when we come to the truth, we come to it in different ways. Matters of mirth are not to be determined by the reason. Matters of beauty are not to be determined by the physical senses. The physical senses may be the portals through which an apprehension of beauty comes; but a mental condition, a feeling, is subject to a law of its own, independent of any rational faculty, or any power of ratiocination.

I do not undertake to say that the property in human faculties of discerning the truth which belongs to each faculty, is perfect; that it is always reliable; that it needs no auxiliary; that it ought not to be analyzed and played around about by the reason; but this I say: that every single one of the faculties, to a greater degree as you ascend in the scale, has a certain intuition which belongs to its sphere. It is called *intuition*, for the want of a better name. There is an intuition in all the faculties of men's minds if they exist in full natural power. They have a spontaneity which can be excited by powerful stimulants in those who have it lowest and least. It is there, no matter how undeveloped the man may be—this inherent power by which, more or less clearly, it is able to determine the things which belong to it.

It is by this interior force that men recognize moral qualities in each other, which are invisible. No man sees justice. He may see actions which justice produces, but he does not see the thing itself. The cause which excites the actions exists independent of those actions. We see actions which men call generous; but the sense or feeling of generosity lies back of the actions. Delicacy, frankness, love, wisdom—these are invisible things. The actions which they inspire may be visible, but the qualities are invisible. We judge of them, we have an intuition of them, because they answer to certain corresponding qualities in our own selves.

Now reach our text-truth, at last:

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge [lower knowledge—intellectual, physical knowledge], that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God."

We come to a knowledge of Christ by shaping ourselves into his nature. We do not come to know Christ by gathering together arguments from physical science, nor by grouping texts out of the written Word of God: we come to a knowledge of Christ by a personal experience of those qualities which inhere in him, and which, in power, constitute his divinity. He who has in himself a moral quality which corresponds to that which is in Jesus Christ, and has great sensibility in it, will have a knowledge of Jesus Christ, of God in Christ, or of the Eternal Father, as the case may be. He will have in himself a knowledge which he cannot have by any external process of reasoning. The sensibility of a corresponding nature is a true interpretation, and is the highest argument possible, under such circumstances. It is so much of us as is godlike that gives us the evidence of God. A moral state carried up to a certain degree of intensity will develop evidence and power in the direction of truths of its own kind. And he who is, like Christ, built up in love—built vertically, built laterally, built all round; he whose nature it is to dwell centrally in this great, enriching, all-controlling element and power of love, will have brought into his mind a realization of the existence of God, and of the power of God's nature as a Being of love, which will be overwhelming and all-satisfying; which you cannot get from science, because science does not touch it; and which you cannot get from mere reasoning, because reasoning does not reach to it.

We may help ourselves by reasoning, and we may gain analogies by science; if we turn to the natural world we may find there evidence of the existence of God, so far as divine quality is represented by power and matter; but when we rise to the moral

and personal elements of the divine character, nature has nothing in it which can explain them to us—unless we be nature; and we are. There is nothing in nature, aside from man, out of which we can develop these attributes of the divine Being. We can apprehend them only by having in us moral qualities which correspond to them, and by having them as sensitive to the Divine presence as the thermometer is to the presence of heat, or as the barometer is to the pressure of the atmosphere, or to the presence of moisture in it. These qualities—heat and moisture—are indicated to us by certain instruments; and here is an instrument, the soul of man, existing in the power of a true regenerated love; and this is that which detects the presence, and is inspired by the touch, of the Divine nature, and bears witness to it. It is said that God bears witness in us; but not a whit more than we bear witness to his presence.

I sat last summer sometimes for hours in the dreamy air of the mountains, and saw, over against the Twin Mountain House, the American aspen, of which the forests there are full. I saw all the coquetries and blinkings of that wonderful little tree—the witch, the fairy-tree, of the forest. As I sat there, when there was not a cloud moving, when there was not a ripple on the glassy surface of the river, when there was not a grain of dust lifted, when everything was still—dead still—right over against me was that aspen tree; and there was one little leaf quivering and dancing on it. It was so nicely poised on its long, slender stem that it knew when the air moved. Though I did not know it, though the dust did not know it, and though the clouds did not know it, that leaf knew it; and it quivered and danced, as much as to say, “O wind! you can’t fool me.” It detected the motion of the air when nothing else could.

Now, it only requires sensibility in us to detect physical qualities, if we have the corresponding qualities; or social elements, if we have the corresponding elements; or moral attributes, if we have the corresponding attributes. We detect all qualities by the sensibility in us of corresponding qualities which reveal them to us. And he who has largely the divine element will be able to recognize the divine existence. That element in him is the power by which he is brought to a knowledge of God. And it is a fool that says in his heart, “There is no God.”

If this be a true doctrine, we understand why it is that we know so little of God in this world. “Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself,” is the interpolation which is found in one part of Scripture.

We wonder why God does not come to us, and speak to us; and I have no doubt, if worms can think, that there are just such thoughts in them. If they saw me going over my garden, they might reason about me as you have sometimes reasoned about the great Master of all. The worm might say, "If there is a real intelligent being above me, such as it is rumored there is among worms, why don't he make himself known to me?" But what have I that I could tell a worm? Suppose I should read to him the Ten Commandments; or suppose I should describe to him a railroad, would he understand me? Would these things be any more to him than so much water on the back of a goose that rolls off as quick as it touches? Suppose I should undertake to tell him about my household; about the love that exists there; about the commonwealth; about justice; about heroism, or anything of that kind? What sort of a time would I have if you were all worms, and I were preaching to you? What could I do to make you comprehend? I should stand outside of you. You would be so small that I could not get into you. There would be nothing in you which would correspond to that which is in me. There would be no vibrating nerve in you on which I could play.

Give me a harp supplied with strings, and let me sweep my hand over them, and I can produce sounds; but if I take a harp that has no strings, and sweep my hand through the void, no sounds will flow forth.

If God be what we suppose him to be, the All-Father, filling the heavens, and transcending all other beings in majesty and power and goodness; and if we are going up toward him gradually, rising from a low state, from point to point, and understanding him according to our unfolding, and only so; if the infinite horizon of his nature is far above us; if our sense of delicacy, our sense of sympathy, our sense of love, our sense of justice, and our sense of goodness are merely alphabetic; and if God's being fulfills the grand suggestions of moral quality that are in us, unrolling them, and carrying them up and out into vast and infinite degrees, then how little do we understand of God's nature! and how little can we understand of it! When we have been lifted heavenward by the most mighty inspirations; when we are conscious of heroism in men; when we know what it is to be willing to die for a child or a friend, how short a distance have we gone toward reaching a comprehension of that Being whose power is incomprehensible, and whose ways are past finding out! It is true that we can learn some things concerning him; but these things are but beginnings of a knowledge of him.

What does a child that has just learned his alphabet, and says, "I can spell a-b ab," know about literature? What does he know of that which goes on in the mind of a scholar? And yet, we are farther away from a knowledge of the divine nature than such a child is from a knowledge of the profoundest scholar that ever lived.

How then shall we, that are filled with selfishness, and pride, and ten thousand lower animal inclinations, from which we have not shaken ourselves free—how shall we enter into sympathy with the vast orb and realm of brightness that inheres in God! Is it strange that God does not reveal himself to us? It is impossible that he should, on account of our condition; on account of the quality of our being; on account of our smallness.

In view of this exposition, I remark, first, that the attempt to prove a God by scientific tests, applying physics strictly, can only reach a small way up. There is an argument that can be constructed that will satisfy—those that it will satisfy; but it is only a little way that it can go. And as I do not think that men can, by scientific observation, test and determine that which lies outside of all physics, so neither do I think this failure need lead to the skepticisms which some men make, but which, thank God, the most eminent scientific men do not make, who are many of them reverent, and who are all of them, I believe, seekers after the truth. The greatest physicists of the day are men who want to know the truth, not only as it is related to matter and to men, but as it is related to divinity.

But that makes no difference. You cannot prove nor disprove by matter that which lies beyond matter; and if, through all the material universe, there is no sign nor hint of God, it does not make any difference in the truth of his spiritual existence.

Secondly, the difficulties which beset the existence of God, as a personal Being, of intellect, of emotion, and of will—a transcendent and glorified man (for that is as near as we can come to it)—these difficulties are not alleviated when we turn in other directions. I am speaking in an age which runs strongly in the line of skepticism as to the existence of God. Because men have not seen him, and cannot apply to him the same tests that they apply to matter, there is a strong drifting towards atheism. I see no alleviation in that direction. That we exist, that nature exists, that there is an infinite chain of cause and effect, that it has had a past history, and that it is to have a future history, we cannot deny. We cannot deny that the vast universe is a fact, except by shutting our eyes.

You meet the same difficulties in the realm of sense. When you say that matter is eternal, you do not help anything. It is useless to attempt to stop the thought by a word. You do not stop the thought at all. We go back on it. It is more difficult for me, a thousand times, to conceive that there is in the universe a self-ordering nature, than it is to conceive of a personal God who takes care of the universe, as we take care of an estate, or of a kingdom.

Neither do I find any relief in turning to the poets. There is no relief for me in atheism, or pantheism, or in the idea that the sum total of the universe, and that all causes and effects, are God; that the whole physical creation is the body of God; that all the intelligence diffused through all creatures is the intelligence of God; that matter and mind as they exist distributed through the universe, are only another name for God. By adopting this theory we may run away from some grievous difficulties; but we run into as many others that are no less grievous. I would rather shut my eyes and give up trying to understand my God, than undertake to trace him partly in myself, partly in you, partly in the laws of matter, and partly in the laws of mind. In such a diffused thought of God there is no relief to me from the difficulties which inhere in this subject.

The prime trouble is that we are not large enough to understand God on any theory. It is our smallness that makes the difficulty. There are no more difficulties surrounding the doctrine of a personal God than there are surrounding the atheistic or pantheistic view. Indeed, it is more rational, and so more easily interpreted.

And, what is more, the moral sensibility by which men may interpret the existence of a being like God is a better evidence to them, so far as they make use of it, than the sensibility of the eye, by which they interpret the existence of physical things; than the sensibility of the ear, by which they interpret the existence of that which appeals to the sense of hearing; or than the sensibility of the hand, by which they interpret the existence of things which they touch.

I know music as well as though I could put the carpenter's rule on it, though I cannot subject it to any such measurement. I know warmth, though I cannot see it. I judge of it by other senses than that of sight. I know what heroism is, though I cannot test it in any of those ways in which I test lower physical qualities. I know when I am in the presence of a great nature, by the effect produced upon me by that nature, overflowing me

with his influence, and stimulating me. Yea, though the man speak not, I feel the power of his being.

And a corresponding experience to this, is that by which men know that God is ; by which they know that there is a glorious Centre of warmth, and light, and power, and love, and truth, and justice. All that which came latest in the development of the race ; all that which came as the fruit of civilization, and, more properly, of religion ; all that which works away from brute force, from selfishness, from self-depending pride, and which aspires toward a nobler future manhood—all that, it is, that calls out for God, and says, “There is a God—*there is a God!*”

Although this is an argument that is not satisfactory to lower natures, it is an argument that is absolute and conclusive to higher natures. The soul is its own best witness, in its sensibility, and in its yearnings after the reality of a Being that is improving it with his own qualities.

Do you suppose that the day swelters, and that there is no sun which is breeding heat ? Do you suppose that the night is dark, and that there is no withdrawal of that which gives the light of the day ? And if this principle is true when applied to our lower nature, how much more is it true when applied to our higher nature !

Now, if you take the New Testament, you will be struck, all the way through, with the style of evidence of the existence and presence of God which it insists upon. There are no arguments given in it to prove the divine existence. When Christ was in habitual controversy in Jerusalem, with the educated men of his nation, and they said to him, “If you are divine, make it manifest to us—show us some sign by which we shall know it,” his reply was, “You are not able to judge of that which is divine. You have not that nature which is necessary to enable one to do it. But if you were sensitive to that which is good and true, you would *feel* that I am divine. The fact that you do not feel it indicates a deadness in your condition. It is a sign that you lack that by which alone one can determine what is divine, and beautiful, and just, and true.”

And the apostles, from beginning to end, taught their disciples that they must grow in grace if they would grow in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Here, in the text which we have selected, the grand highway toward knowledge is represented to be that God “would grant you, according to the richness of his glory, to be strengthened by might by his Spirit in the inner man”—not in this outer man ; not in this animal body ; not in these

basilar instincts ; not in these lower forms of physical reasoning ; but in that man which is within. “ That Christ may dwell in your hearts ”—not in your convictions—“ by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

In the court of the human soul stand two advocates. Pride, when the heavens are opened, looks in, and says, “ No God—no God ;” and Selfishness declares, when the record is opened, “ No evidence of a God ;” but once let the bright inspiration of the Divine Spirit wake in the soul of man the rapture of Love, and all the generosities which cluster around about it, and then let the record be opened, and, like Thomas of old, Love lifts up its hands with outcry, and says, “ My Lord, and my God !”

Whatever in you is pure ; whatever in you is just ; whatever in you is sweet-minded ; whatever in you has patience in suffering for others ; whatever in you reaches out toward the magnitude and heroism of the divine character, as made known in the Lord Jesus Christ—this refuses to disbelieve that there is a God ; but whatever in you is low, and carnal, and fleshly, and of the earth, earthly—that it is which treads evidence under foot, and says, “ There is no God.”

Listen in yourselves to that which is best. Listen to that which is divinest. There is a God blazing afar off, and creating days that need no sun. There is a God that is apprehended, not by means of physical senses, but by means of qualities which correspond to his. There is a Spirit of central love that is working through the universe to subdue all things to its power. Toward that great glowing tropical Center all things tend, slowly, yet surely ; and that grand Love which carries in its bosom rectitude, and justice and truth, shall triumph over the physical, shall overcome the material, and shall create out of matter the royalty of mind, out of mind the royalty of spirit, and out of spirit the royalty of sonship in the heavenly land.

To that God we yield our obedience. Up to him we send our feeble cries, which he may interpret according to the greatness of his wisdom. In his service we undertake to live by following the qualities which inhere in him. It is this Lord and God who is represented to us in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we call our Master. By him we are redeemed with a daily and everlasting redemption. We love him ; we trust him ; we follow him ; we live in him ; we die in him ; and we will reign with him.

We are permitted, to-day, to renew our pledges of fealty, by this external rite,* which has in it something that comforts us, and stays us, and helps us, and will so long as we remain in the flesh.

After the blessing is pronounced, all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to live in obedience to him, are affectionately invited to remain and partake of these memorials, which celebrate his love for us.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.†

O THOU that art above our thought, how poor, to thee, is every word which we speak ! How unwise and how foolish are we to thee, before whom angels are charged with folly, and whose being transcends ours immeasurably ! How small we are ! and how far from thee ! Neither do we know of anything that could bring us into relation with thee but love, which searches all things : which is universal and infinite ; which looks to the least, and the poorest, and the most needy ; which draws all things toward infinite fullness and bounteous supply.

We come, then, asking that love may interpret our want. We are filled with all the fruit of ignorance. We spring from beneath, and work steadfastly toward the light, but are children of darkness until we meet the beams that come from thee. We begin with selfishness in every part of us, and do not know how to carry ourselves unselfishly till the divine principle of love is planted in us. And even then, how unapt are we as scholars ! And how unskillful are we in waging war against all that tends to beat us down to the earth ! How ignorant are we of the best ways ! How we vibrate from side to side of painful experiences ! How many things we do that we would not do again ! How many things we think that afterward we learn that we should not think ! How many things we feel, the experience of which teaches us that they are not right ! How every one of us can learn no lesson from any book, nor from any life, but only from the round of his own solitary life and thought, that beat about here and there ! As birds before mighty winds are driven headlong, not as they would, but in spite of themselves, so often are we driven.

We thank thee, O thou most merciful God, that thou art in sympathy with all the race that thou hast brought forth, and art nourishing it. We rejoice that thou knowest its faith, its history, and all its experiences, and that there is in thee that which corresponds to the wants of thy creatures, so that thou art all in all. It is this bounty of God, it is this grandeur of its expenditure and adaptation to all the realms of the universe, that, whenever we shall know what it is, and see thee as thou art, will make thee so glorious.

Now, because we are but moles and bats, we cannot understand thee. Now, because we are so unlike thee, there is but little in us which interprets thee to us. Now, we are winter, and thou art summer. Now, we are dark and moveless, and thou art light and activity. We rejoice to believe that we are going on ; that the days and hours are bringing us nearer and nearer

* The administration of the Lord's Supper.

† Immediately preceding the admission of members into the church.

to thee ; that we shall, ere long, cross the border ; and that the places which knew us shall know us no more forever. The sorrows, the sins, the griefs, all the mighty throes, of earthly life, shall be left behind, and we shall rise into that realm where there shall be no more sickness, nor pain, nor tears ; where the everlasting Father shall bring us into the great family of the redeemed, and let us see him as he is. And we shall be like him.

Toward that consummation, with outstretched hands, at night, and in the clamors of the day, we press, seeking thee, and longing for thee—for thy strength ; for thy goodness ; for thy power. We are willing to wait. We are willing to serve. We are willing to bear the apprenticeship of this far-off and beginning life. We are willing to go through those steps which are necessary to learn how to disentangle ourselves from that which is physical and animal, and ripen toward that which is spiritual and divine. But all our hope is in thee. And O ! if thou, blessed Spirit, art abroad, and art seeking to save the lost ; if thou art our Guide and Enlightener, then, whatsoever path is opened before us, we will walk in patiently ; and we will rejoice in troubles and afflictions and infirmities, so that they may work out in us immortality and glory by and by.

We pray that thou wilt look upon those who seem to themselves almost spent and overcome ; who know not which way to turn ; who see nothing, and hear nothing, and feel nothing ; and who cry out after God, and are unsuccessful. O Lord, abandon not any to despair. Let the light of peace be ministered to them according to their helplessness. And let those who are froward toward thee not find thee froward toward them. Let those who are heartbroken find thee dwelling with them. Give them rest and comfort.

And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to those who are in doubt, and who know not which is the way of duty. Help them to interpret the right. Come thou, with thine enlightening Spirit, very near to those who are mourning over sins, and who are filled with compunctions for their transgressions. We beseech of thee to help them to cleanse their hearts, and to make such ample confession before thee that thou wilt forgive them, and speak peace to their troubled souls.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon all who are bearing the heat and burden of the day ; who carry in their secular life the yoke, and every day draw the burden behind them. May they find that as their day is, so their strength shall be also. Be thou near to them, and guide them away from evil, and lead them into all that is right.

We pray that thou wilt more and more teach men to rise above their lower self, and into their higher and nobler self, where they shall have communion with God, and evidence of thy being.

We pray that thou wilt bless all that to-day have come near to thee for thy blessing. Make their hearts glad before thee ; and may their lips speak thy praise.

Grant thy blessing to rest upon those who have come to acknowledge the fulfillment of thy promises ; upon those who have made covenant with thee, that if thou wouldst spare them or those that were dear to them, they would serve thee, and have come with an inward purpose to ratify, before thee, and among thy people, that covenant ; upon those in thy presence who rejoice with great gladness because evils have been averted, and because blessings which it seemed to them would never come have been showered upon them ; and upon those who have seen the wave that threatened to overwhelm them.

pass away, and leave them safe. Hear, to-day, their thanksgiving. And if there be those who have been rescued from great outward loss, and whose fears have not come to pass, and who have come hither to thank God for his goodness in their prosperity, may their hearts be attuned to thanksgiving indeed which shall be music to thee. If there be those who have returned from journeys, and have escaped from mighty tempests upon the sea, by which thou hast shown thy power, and if they stand in the sanctuary to-day and remember all their danger, and the great goodness of God to them and to theirs, hear their heart-felt thanksgiving, and listen to their joy and rejoicing. And we beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that if there are any that are of us but are not with us, and that cast feeble or wistful thoughts hitherward, and think of our joy in the sanctuary, and of their wretchedness at home, let some of the blessings that we are inheriting go to them. May that peace of God which passeth all understanding visit them.

We pray for thy blessing to rest upon all classes and conditions of men. May that spirit of love prevail out of which comes truth, and justice, and righteousness, and peace, and forbearance, and wisdom. May we learn to hold all qualities of excellence in love. May men learn more and more to help each other, and less and less to contend against each other. May we know how to cast down to the ground the animal that is in us, and how to exalt the angel, and bring forth in our living together more and more of that perfectness which is among the saints in glory.

We remember those who have gone before, and thank thee to-day for their faith, and patience, and victory. We remember our parents, our brothers and our sisters, that are removed from us. We remember our dear children that have gone. We remember friends and neighbors and laborers that have left their earthly heritage, and gone to glory. These are all of that company that calls out to us, to-day, saying, "Come." We hear them; we feel their grateful presence; we believe in their rest; we believe that we are not far from it; we rejoice in it; and we bless thee to-day for that great and triumphant church which rides above us in our militant and earthly condition.

Be pleased to bless all those that are to-day to be united to this church. Grant that this may not seem to them a sad and dreadful day, but that it may seem to them a day of great joy and gladness; a day of higher aspiration and nobler hope; a day of sympathy and helpfulness. May they see that the way of wisdom is not hard, though it be narrow, and at times steep. If it seems to them difficult, may they understand that the difficulty is only that which they have in climbing from that which is lower to that which is higher; from things worse to things better; from poverty to riches; from ignorance to knowledge; from selfishness to goodness. May they rejoice in that inspiration of God which has set them on their way to a higher and nobler life. And, with all watching and fidelity, may they become our brethren, and may we become their brethren, in the Lord. And we pray that thou wilt make this a day of Christian fellowship in the hearts of all thy people.

Spread abroad, we beseech of thee, throughout the world, the knowledge of thy Word and the influence of thy Spirit. And may all the earth be filled with the light and the glory of God. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be the praise evermore. *Amen.*

THE NATURE AND POWER OF HUMILITY.

I shall speak to you, this morning, on The Nature and Power of Humility; and have selected as an appropriate introduction to the subject, the language contained in the second chapter of Philippians, beginning with the third verse:

“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

And then, in order that they may have these general directions embodied in the form of an example, he says:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

It is to illustrate lowliness of mind, or humility, that this description of Christ is given. I shall return to it by-and-by.

Humility cannot be defined by any terms, for the reason that it is not simply a transitory experience. It is not, either, a sentiment of definite character, such as *justice* or *truth*—a separate single quality. It is rather a method of life. It is a term which includes the whole way in which a man shall use himself, his power, his opportunity, his very life. And although it often includes self-distrust and self-renunciation, these are simply incidental to it. It is far more comprehensive than any of these, its contents.

Men think, frequently, that humility is a sense of our own inferiority to those who are around about us; and a great many men try to be humble on that principle, mistaking the right thing, and saying, “I am by nature no better than anybody else.” But that is not true. Some men by nature are a great deal better than other people. Would it be comely, or in any way morally profit-

able, for a man, standing six feet high, and looking on men four feet high, or five feet high, to say, "I am no taller than they are, or than anybody else is?" Humility does not require the giving up of truth. It does not require that I should pretend to be worse than men whom I know to be worse than I am. It does not require any tergiversation for the sake of a pretended lowering of ourselves. It does not require any perversion of absolute facts or qualities. This passage, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves," means no such thing as that.

It has often been supposed that humility consisted in a sense of our great inferiority in the presence of divine law, or what may be called our ideal of perfect manhood. Unquestionably it is true that every man is inferior to that which he should be, and that when he measures himself by the divine law, or by his highest conception of truth and perfect manhood, he has occasion for more or less sorrow and regret, and sometimes for shame and remorse; and it is true that this may enter into the experience of humility; but it is not the description of it. It is but one single pin in the whole dress. Humility is an inflection or adaptation of the great law of benevolence, as exemplified in our text. Humility is described as the action, as the whole conduct, of One, who, standing in heaven equal with God, and thinking it no robbery to claim equality with God, yet, for purposes of true benevolence or love, bowed down from his glory, took man's place, and the lowest place, and accepted with it the most infamous punishment—yea, death. In other words, he went through that entire line of action which signified, in the most intensely vivid manner conceivable and possible, the use of a great Being for the benefit of those who were transcendently inferior to him. The atonement of Christ did not consist in suffering in any one way, nor in going through any one routine. It was the sovereign whole of that action by which God disclosed this to be the interior nature of the Godhead—that it bowed down all its sovereignty and power to the lowest and the weakest, and gave itself in love to lift them up.

Therefore, when Paul, writing to the Philippian church, among his last as well as among his noblest letters, would exhort them to lowliness of mind, to esteeming others better than themselves, and to looking not on their own things, but on the things of others, he draws this magnificent picture of the deeds and actions of the Lord Jesus Christ, who took the glory and power of his heavenly estate for nothing, and made errand to earth for love, and on earth took the lowest positions, and suffered, and endured the extremest sufferings of the physical body, applying heart-love as a leaven to the

development and elevation of the whole human family. That was humility in him. That is, it was counted that the very highest gifts—even divine ones—were not too good to be used for the lowest and the poorest and the least.

This is the purport, also, of that passage which we read to you in the opening services, where Christ washed his disciples' feet, and said to them, "If I, Lord and Master" (in our version it is "your Lord and Master;" but the *your* may be left out with advantage, as it should be)—"If I, Lord and Master, have so served you, performing the most menial offices of service known among men, how much more ought you to serve each other!" It is the same lesson again. It is the service of love to those that are inferior. It is the use of one's whole self for the benefit of those who need succor and help.

He is humble who thinks of his power of understanding, of his genius, of his moral sensibility, of his imagination, of his fancy, of his accumulations, of everything that is beautiful or strong in him, as good—for what? To be used for the lowest and the least, rather than for his own self. These are not to be gewgaws put in the window and exhibited, as a mercer exhibits goods that are on sale for his own profit. They are not to be glittering ornaments for the delectation of our own faculties. They are gifts; they are powers held in trust, to be employed as God employs his whole life, as typified in the life and suffering and death of his Son. We are to take all that belongs to us, and count it as nothing but to be used for our fellow-men.

You understand what I mean when I say that humility is not so much a special experience, a single sentiment, as it is such a conception of the worth of a man's life and of his powers as shall make him feel that to use them for those that are low and poor and helpless, is the noblest thing he can do with them. He is proud who thinks that he is too good to serve the poor and lowly; and he is humble who thinks that there is nothing in him so good but that the best use he can make of it is to devote it to the great service of humanity.

Humility, then, is not a sentiment alone, but a method of life. It is a disposition to bestow the whole of one's life and power in such a way that it shall redound to the advantage of humanity—to the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, as it is called in Scripture.

Now, in carrying out this idea so explained, I remark, first, that he is not, of course, humble, who feels himself to be an unworthy man. A man may be very selfish, and on that account

may feel unworthy—and he ought to. He is a man that *is* very unworthy. When a man is tired he is apt to feel unworthy. Bilious men feel unworthy. Hypochondriacs feel unworthy. Men who are prostrated by excessive addiction to business feel unworthy. And men in these states often fall into the old language of self-depreciation. But it is the result of a morbid condition, and has no relation to the gracious quality of humility. Some men who are over-taught, or under-taught, or wrongly taught, or not taught at all, go around trying to feel humble. And frequently, when persons join the church, people say to them, “You must be humble;” “You must be humble;” “You must be humble;” and they go around trying to be humble, as a man on a ship goes around trying not to be sea-sick. As if by some physical effort or other a man could reach to that state of mind which is called *humility*! In the first place, the idea is simply absurd, ridiculous; and in the second place, the means which men employ in attempting to carry it out are still more absurd.

Not a great while ago there was born in Great Britain a charming soul—not particularly one of genius, but one rounded out into symmetry, with great beauty of nature and great beauty of character. Born in a Christian family, and with sufficient wealth to make life eminently desirable, full of gratification and joy; with tastes that allied her (for it was a woman) to nature—for there was nothing in nature that did not concern her, all its aspects and moods and contents found in her a sympathizer—she found herself drawn toward the poor of her parish, and her joy was in relieving them, rather than in playing the lady and receiving attentions. And little by little she felt that her mission was to look after the poor; and especially she felt in herself the movements of compassion toward those who were sick. Although her hands were tender, and her way of life never necessitated work on her part, she took work upon herself. Finding that this was, more and more a passion of her soul, and hearing that there was a school for the training of nurses in Germany, she went abroad; she exiled herself from home: and there, literally, she became a servant—for that was the probationary requirement of the institution; and she learned to scrub the floor, to cleanse the rudest vessels, to set the table, and to do the work of menials. Thus, through months and months, she worked herself up gradually to service by the bedside, and to taking more responsible duties. She submitted herself with the most absolute willingness to be sent anywhere that the superintendent chose to send her. She spent perhaps a year or two in this training institution, in order that she might learn how

to take care of the sick. And on returning to London she began in hospitals to practise self-devotion to the poor and needy. She, full of intelligence and of knowledge, with an exquisite sense of beauty, much given to humor, seeing things in the divine light of mirth, full of freshness, eminently fit to adorn any station in society, gave herself, because it was her joy, to the taking care of the sick. She gave herself to hospital service. After some further probationary experience, and after refusing, with great distrust of her own qualifications, to take charge of a hospital, at length she was almost forced to take charge of one; and speedily she was transferred to Liverpool, where she was made superintendent of a hospital and workhouse combined, whose affairs, for a considerable period of time, she administered with extreme wisdom. At last, taking contagion from the patients whom she served, she gave up her sweet and beautiful life, a sacrifice in the ministry of benevolence.

This is what I call humility. This noble Agnes Jones (her life is written, and it ought to be in every household: it is fit to be printed in letters of gold)—she, with everything that life had to offer her, looked upon herself, and said, “I am not too good, all that is in me is not too good, to be laid down in the service of the poor, and the sick, and the needy.” That is humility.

What, then, if this be humility, is pride? We hear a great deal said against pride. I wish there were more pride—of one sort; less of another. A man without pride is generally a man without character. Self-respect is one of the crowning elements; and it is derived from the feeling of self-esteem, on which pride is based. And yet, the Scripture represents pride as odious, and condemns it severely. It is condemnable—one kind of pride. What is that kind of pride which is to be condemned? It is that which leads a man to think he is too good for any other use than that which pertains to his own comfort and satisfaction. You think you are not proud, because you do not hold your head up. You see a man going through the streets, and walking with great pomposity, and stepping with a stately air, and you say, “What a proud fellow he is!” You may be just as proud as he, and yet you may be slouching and uncomely in your gait. Humility does not depend upon the way in which a man carries his body; it depends upon what his life is: upon what he means to do with it; upon where he puts it, and where he keeps it, and what service it renders. They are humble who think that everything in them is fit to serve others with; and they are proud who think that God made them of such fine materials that other people ought to serve them, instead of their serving other

people. I do not care how sweet you are, or how beautiful you are, if you make other people serve you, and keep yourself in the attitude of being served, and so manage that every wind brings to you some good fortune, and every net that is drawn comes laden with wealth for you, and the center of everything with you is self, self,—you are proud. I do not care anything about what your exterior is; if you are humble, it is because you consecrate the power of your life to the good of others. In the other case you expect others to serve you; and there is the antithesis. Such a view of moral benefit, of spiritual excellence in life, that one thinks himself and his endowments too good to be devoted to inferior things—that is pride.

I find in my notes a reference to Matthew, the twentieth chapter, from the twentieth to the twenty-seventh verses inclusive. Let us see what it is. Oh! I see. Among the disciples there was a mother with two boys, and she had an eye to their advancement in life. So she slyly brought them to the Lord, and asked that when his kingdom should come in fully, one of them might be prime minister, and the other treasurer, in that kingdom. When the disciples learned this, a quarrel very naturally broke out among them, because such an office was just what every one of them wanted. Here were these precious twelve, and each of them wanted to help himself, each wanted to serve his own interests, and each was mad with the others because they wanted to do the same thing. (When you see others committing the sin that you commit, how you hate that sin!) Jesus called these quarreling disciples to him—and I always admire the sweetness and gentleness of the Master in his dealing with them. When he had called them, he said, “Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant [*minister* it says; but *minister* has lost its meaning], and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your slave [for that is the original]; even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister [that is, even as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve], and to give his life a ransom for many.” So he rebuked the pride, as well as the selfishness, of the disciples.

Here is a contrast instituted between worldly potentates and God’s real princes; and it turns simply on this: that life and faculty are too good to be devoted to one’s own self—that they are best used when they are devoted to the promotion of other people’s happiness.

Let us, then, apply these thoughts. First, there may be humility among kings, and princes, and nobles, and rich men, and

strong men, and famous men. We must not think, because men wear fine clothes, and live in fine houses, and are everywhere praised, that they are therefore proud or puffed up. It is not their exaltation, it is not the place that you find them in, but it is the spirit with which they have used that which God gave them in themselves, and all that he gave them around themselves, that determines whether they are or are not humble; and, thank God, there are a great many princes and crowned heads who, I believe, devote the energy of their life, and the power of their kingdoms, with simplicity and sincerity, to the service of their fellow-men. Not all kings will be smitten down, in the latter day, from the uppermost circle to the lowest. There will be some crowned heads that will stand first then, as they stand eminent now.

On the other hand, there will be found, I think, a great many ostentatiously good men who will be very low then. For piety has become organized and professional. Religiousness has become a matter of respectability, and almost of decency. Public sentiment requires it. I do not think it uncharitable, therefore, to say that there are a great many popes, and a great many cardinals, and a great many bishops, and a great many ministers and pastors, and a great many persons of garrulous piety and of eminence in the Church, and a great many that are officers of devotion, who will not stand the test at last. They will have used all their power, not for the welfare of the poor, of the needy, of their fellow-men around about them, but for their own welfare.

When I look at Rome, when I look at the cathedrals that are in the world, when I look at the churches, when I look at the churchmen, and hear them denounce Garibaldi, and Mazzini, and Kosuth, and Garrison, and such like men, of whom the world has a few here and there, I do not say that these men are models, I do not say that there is not much in them that they would better lack, and much that they lack that they would better have; but this I say, that when men like them take the royalty of their understanding, all the intensity of their dispositions, and the whole power of their life, and devote them to the sacred cause of a principle, and live for it, and suffer for it, and die for it, they answer the descriptions that are given of the humility of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. Let me be ranked with those men who are denounced, if they are denounced because they disturb the peace of society in order to make it better.

Humility is not inconsistent, either, with learning, with philosophy, with the full sense of a brilliant genius, with science, or

with scepticism. Whoever, in profound earnestness and sincere enthusiasm, is working for the welfare of his fellow-men, and not for himself, whoever is working for the world, for mankind, for God, for the future, is a consecrated man. Many may work by indifferent and even by erroneous methods, but the thing is the *spirit*. Not he in battle that slays the most enemies and turns the tide, but he that means the most heartily, and the most fearlessly and courageously devotes himself to his country in the conflict, is the hero. Many and many a man rides off from the field and takes the honors, whereas the man who bore the heat and burden of the day never comes back again. But God keeps account of such cases. And in this world, whoever knows that God has given him greatness of understanding, need not play the fool in order to call himself humble, and say, "I am no wiser than anybody else." Do you suppose Lord Bacon needed to make believe that he was a buffoon? A man may have great genius, he may stand with Shakespeare, and Goethe, and others like them, and may know that God has richly endowed him; and it is not pride for him to know it. A man may believe that the truth as it has been organized in theologies is not the best truth of God; he may stand with the modern scientist and say, "The better revelation is yet to come;" and I may believe that the man is half right and half wrong (as I do), and if his knowledge and his control over the secrets of nature are employed to glorify himself and augment his reputation, if he dashes men's long-cherished hopes carelessly and heedlessly, if he treads on what he chooses to call "religious prejudices," in which are bound up the very heart, life, and comfort of thousands of his fellow-men, he is neither a wise philosopher nor a good man. I would not shock the moral sense of a Brahmin. I would not wound the religious feelings of a devotee. Their faith is that in which are contained their life-hopes, and I would not take it from them; or, if I did, I would do it as tenderly as a mother would take a dangerous weapon from her babe. And I am shocked at the way in which philosophers and scientific men handle the things about which we have twined our hearts. When "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" is spoken of as *mutton* (there is one whose name has been much praised that said it, and it was printed); when I see the authors of scientific essays, because they do not go with the Church, and all the doctrines that have been held by the Church, speaking with contempt of them—doctrines that are very dear to millions of men—I feel myself justified in denouncing their pride and their hard-heartedness. It is true that in this half-lighted period in which we live, when we see as through a glass darkly,

and not yet face to face, we are all making mistakes; and what has been the history of the world and of the human heart from the beginning, and always, but this, that certain doctrinal statements, certain symbols, have been the channels through which have gone our sweetest and most sacred feelings. To me and to you the name of Jesus, as the crucified Son of God, is inexpressibly precious. All that I ever knew of enthusiasm, all that I ever knew of rapturous emotion, stands connected with that name. And no more certainly do the pipes of this organ respond to the valves that open them, than does my heart respond to that Name which is above every other name, and is more full of blessed associations than any other. And that man who comes to me, whether he knows my feelings or not, and treats that Name with contempt, and dishonor, and disgrace, speaking of it with desecrating familiarity, wounds me in the tenderest part of my life.

I am making these remarks on that side, because I want to say, on the other, that where scientific men really love the truth, and though they do not see their way to accept the doctrines of the Church, but they earnestly seek to know the revealed will of God in nature, where their great purpose is to lift up the foundations of their times, and make men more universally happy than they have been, I do not say that they are perfect, I do not say that there is not much in them that ought to be arrested and changed, but I do say that they are carrying themselves mainly after the pattern of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They count nothing in their reason and life too dear to be put, as they understand it, to the best service of their fellow-men. And that is the divine example—not this thing or that thing specially, but using self, all of it, as a lever-power by which to lift up others, being in sympathy with them, in love toward them, and in reverential obedience to God.

Let us not, then, rail at the Church, and its sects. Let us not, either, rail at men who are not of the Church, but who are working in the great field of God, and endeavoring to serve their generation according to the best instruments which have been put into their hands.

I remark, once more, that mechanical pursuits may be dedicated to humility and to humanity—to humanity in the sense in which I have explained it, and so to humility. All good work is beneficent; and all mechanical work, if performed with a consciousness of its beneficence, is blessed. When Goodyear toiled through years and years, suffering poverty, almost literally consuming house and home, that he might at last perfect the use of India-rubber, which has now become a necessity of the whole world, do

not you suppose that he was doing a great work of beneficence? Happily he was a man that knew it; but if he had not known it, he would have been an unconscious worker in the great field of benevolence. He has laid the habitable globe under obligation to him. And yet he was not a writer, nor an orator; he was simply an experimenter with sulphur and India-rubber.

When Howe was inventing the sewing-machine—the needle, (for it all turned on that),—do not you suppose that in changing the mechanical condition of the globe, as he did, he was conferring blessings innumerable upon men and women? Arkwright, and Watt, and Fulton, and Morse—these men, by their physical achievements, have lit the face of civilization. There are engineers working in tunnels, or upon railroads, or upon bridges, or upon various other vast structures of national importance, who are working just as directly toward the latter-day glory as men are who are preaching the Word. And oh, that they only knew it! Oh, that they only felt it!

The farmer carries his wheat to Chicago—a thousand bushels; and he says to himself, “A thousand bushels; two dollars a bushel; two thousand dollars! I will pay off that thousand dollar mortgage, and then I will be out of debt. And I shall have a thousand dollars to put in the bank!” I am getting on! He takes a selfish view of the whole matter. He thinks that he is beginning to look up in the world. He is elated with the prospect of being a prosperous man. He has gained so much, and he is going to gain more, he thinks. He says, “I will pull down my barns and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.” All you can say of that man is, that he is a respectable citizen, and a prosperous man.

But when he goes to market with that grain, suppose, not unconscious of his prosperity, he should feel in himself, “O, how many mouths this grain will feed! It will be carried across the sea, and the peasants will eat it, and little children will grow strong on it!” Suppose pictures of the many ways in which beneficence and bounty will be conferred by his industry, should go out with what he has raised. Suppose he should say, “I thank God that I have been permitted to work the soil, and sow, and reap, and garner, and winnow, and bring to market, that which, in the providence of God, is going out into the world to make men happy.” And suppose, as he turns to go home, he should look back and say, “Farewell, wheat; go and make men happy: I am made happy in sending you.”

Is not that the way to work for the world? Is not that the

way to make the most out of physical labor? There is not a man that drives a nail, or turns a screw, or shoves a plane, or works in stone, or plaster, or anything else, that is not a benefactor, if he only knew it and felt it. What a blessed thing it is for one to feel that he is a benefactor in the pursuit which he follows! On the other hand, what a beggarly thing it is for one to work from sordid motives all the time, and, instead of doing things for the up-building of society, to look at them from the meanest point of view, and take the lowest and most degraded conceptions of them!

All men who work mechanically, and work inspired by their better nature, are God's workmen, working for their kind. When you work, why do not you take the good of it, and consecrate yourselves to it, and look at it from the higher plane? If a man does this, and says, "God has called me to mechanics and farming, and I hope that I may, by my fidelity, and by the fruits of my labor, advance the cause of God in the world," he is following Christ, and is devoting all that he has in him to the welfare of his fellow-men. There are a great many men who are doing this, and who are not known.

You recollect the story of a benefactor in an Italian city, or some city of Southern Europe. I have told it several times, but it will bear telling again. He earned the reputation, in his lifetime, of being a sordid man. He amassed a great property, and died almost universally hated. But, at his death, facts came to light which caused him to be universally admired. He saw how the poor in that city suffered from the great scarcity of water; and he devoted his life to the bringing of water into the city and making it so abundant that all could have what they needed without money and without price. He consecrated his fortune to the building of an aqueduct by which the city should be supplied with water. Thus he became a benefactor through whose generosity the lowest and the least of all future generations should be refreshed and blessed. Such was the result of that man's consecrating his life to a noble beneficence.

There are a great many men who make little pretense to generosity, but who after all have under all their brown homeliness a great heart of benefaction, and who are giving their life to an unrequited and unrecognized service, cheerfully and gladly. And thus they are following Christ in his humility, and are disciples of this grand Christian quality.

Those who give themselves to the service of the sick and the poor, though they are able to do far better for themselves, are humble followers of Christ. There are daughters of wealth who

are doing it, in New York, in Philadelphia, in Boston, in Brooklyn. There are many noble women who leave their homes to serve the suffering and the needy; who give their feet no rest; who are engaged night and day in works of benevolence. Some of them are in the command of magnificent fortunes; and they never think, apparently, "How shall my fortune serve me?" but, "How shall I make my fortune serve those who are in want?" There are more saints in this world, if you only know where to look for them, than you think of. You look in the Calendar; but that is not the place to look. There are some saints in the kitchen. You do not believe it; but there are. There are saints in the nursery. There are saints in many a poor widow's house. There are saints among the uneducated.

One day, a poor English woman, without home, or friends, or means, or strength, wandered in the streets of Brooklyn, and was taken by a poor woman into her house. This poor householder was working for her own daily bread; and yet, for six years, she took care of this stranger, as if she were her own mother—though there was not a drop of blood between them, except Christ's blood. She has toiled for her, she has nourished her, and she has clothed her in her old age; and last week the dear old wanderer passed away. Now tell me, where are your saints if such households as that have no saints in them, which, in their poverty, give their all for others, through years? It makes me ashamed of the way I administer my power, to hear and see such instances as that. There are servant-girls that are saints. Much as we revile and ridicule the Bridgets, there are those among them who toil night and day, and spend almost nothing on themselves, that they may help those that they have left behind in the father-land. There is a stream of gold, almost as broad as the Gulf Stream, going across the Atlantic Ocean, to fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters. There are girls who work, ten years it may be, to support their parents at home, or to bring out the "young fry" to this country. Is there no heroism in this? Are we, in our spheres, doing as well with our talents and our wealth as these servants of the kitchen are? May it not be that many and many a lady whom the servant has let into the house will have to be servant in heaven to let the servant in?—for the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

There are a great many who sacrifice their lives for others almost without knowing that they do it, so perfectly does love disenchant servitude, and take away from it its odiousness. How many maiden sisters, in order to make the married sister the pride

of the village, have hid behind her, and served her, foregoing their own pleasure that she might be happy, and becoming the nurse, the school-mistress, the governess, the universal servant in the household, for ten years, for twenty years, for thirty years, yea, and laying down their life in that service? People speak of such an one, saying, "O, she is a plain person; she lives with her sister, and takes care of her children. She is very good, but there is nothing specially interesting about her." O no, she is not much seen; she is little known outside of the domestic circle; she does not write for the papers, or anything of that sort; but she gives her life to her sister, and to her sister's family, and lives contented, and dies without a name. Do not you suppose that heaven has something to say about such folks?

There are multitudes who have gone out to teach in beggarly neighborhoods. People wonder that they go to such places, when they can go to better ones—when they can find openings in respectable schools, where they will be in good society; where they will have everything that is desirable for pleasure and comfort.

There is nothing like self-denial in good society! I have the most charming times when I deny myself at home, in the evening; when, my work being done, I put on my slippers, and sit down before a bright coal fire, in a good plush easy chair, and get all the little viands I want on one side, and the company I prefer on the other. I have a roaring good time of self-denial under such circumstances. I delight in self-denial when it comes in that shape!

And there are a great many teachers who are willing to deny themselves, if they can do it in the way that is most agreeable to them. They will teach, and teach well, if they can teach something that is becoming, in a place that is becoming—that is, in a place where they will be appreciated; where their talents will be known; where they will have the easiest work, and the most praise, and the largest wages, and the greatest amount of spare time; where they will be invited into good society; and where there will be no end to their enjoyment. Oh, yes, shake the bough for enjoyment, enjoyment, enjoyment, eternally, and then call that self-sacrifice; call that self-denial; call that serving God!

But there are many who go past these places of ease into neighborhoods where the poor live; and they toil every day with body and mind; and through years they consecrate themselves to this work; and they die in it. They are spoken of as "strange people." Yes, strangers and pilgrims that seek a better city, they are.

Go through our Southern States. There are found the daughters of farmers, and the daughters of lawyers, and the daughters of

rich men, who have taken in their hands their life, their respectability, and all their aptitude for happiness, and gone forth, and are obliged to make themselves the companions of the colored emancipated slaves, are teaching them, and are contented to teach them, though they are objects of aversion, and are excluded from society, and are not recognized. Patiently, hopefully, year by year, they subject themselves to deprivation and to ignominy, and are not willing to go back, but are glad to die there, if that be God's will, giving the power of their life to those who need some one to lift them up. Is not this following Christ in his humility? And is this not humility itself?

Christian brethren, when you again read, in the Word of God, the injunctions to humility, I pray you, lay aside your former notions, so superficial, so erroneous, and take on this larger conception of what it is to be humble—to be humble as Christ was, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; who knew what was the effulgent power that was in him, and emptied himself of his reputation, and became a man, and, being humbled as a man, accepted death, and the most ignominious of all known deaths, the death of the cross, that he might give life to the world. There is your Master!

Many of you wear crosses. I can see, at last beauty has stolen the cross. There was a time when crosses meant tears, sandal-shoon, rude apparel, hard service, for the sake of giving to others; but now every jeweler is racking his ingenuity to make exquisite crosses, coral crosses, all sorts of impearled crosses and diamond crosses, and refined crosses out of every conceivable precious thing. All of us are wearing crosses in the form of ornaments. And these are the kind of crosses that we are apt to like.

That is the way we are serving Him who died on the cross. Is it not time that we reformed in this respect? Is it not time that we learned that he is following the crucified One, who, like him, has taken a deliberate estimate of the contents of his being, and said, "My duty is not to see how much I shall be served, but to see how much I can serve others." He is a follower of Christ who lowers himself, and knows how to make himself the voluntary slave of his fellow-men. He is Christ-like—not the man of the Catechism, not the man of the Bible, not the man of the pulpit or the church, but the man who knows how to bow himself down so that the poor may lie upon his back, and has strength to lift himself so as to lift them with him. He is a follower of Him who once was buried beneath the earth, but now buoys up the earth, and yet shall carry the universe by the power of his self-sacrificing love, and rejoices in the ineffable glory of the future.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

O LORD our God, but for thee what were life but a scene of uncertainty, in which light and darkness interchange, as day and night interchange? What are the fates of men rolling through clouds or through light, through summers and winters of trouble and joy, and what is human destiny, as we look upon it from without, were it not for the interpretation of thy Word, and for the truth made known through Jesus Christ? Who would ask to be born? Having once tasted life, who would taste it again? Who would walk the narrow way, and seek the things that have so much pain in seeking, and so little joy in their grasp? Blessed be thy name, we know that this life is but a beginning. We know that we are started here, and are grown for transplantation, and that, in a fairer clime, without evil, we shall lift up our boughs, and bear fruit to the glory of God.

So we accept the way of God; and we accept it for those who are given to us. How precious is the gift which thou gavest when thou sentest forth into the world, and to our care, these little children! How much of mysterious joy they bring to us, without having power to know why they bring it to us! How their helpless hands are as the hands of mighty musicians, playing upon our souls! How much we have learned from them! How much we have learned of ourselves through them! What tests they have been to us! How have we wrought more, by our children, than ever life wrought in us, for our own selves! What patience, what self-denial, what disinterested kindness, what long-suffering, what atoning love, bearing pain, have we exercised to deliver them from pain! How much has there been opened up in the household of thy nature, so that the family itself has been God's book to us, till we have learned to look at our children in the light of those very feelings which are bred in us by thee, and to give them magnitude, to give them power, and to call them by that name by which every one is named on earth in the Church!

We rejoice that thus thou hast blessed us in that which seemed weakness; in that which seemed to tax and to burden us; in that which drew us away from self, and to the care of others—to a thousand thankless tasks. By the power of love thou hast redeemed them from thanklessness, and raised them into glorious joys. And we thank thee for all that thus we have been taught in the strange economy and mystery of early life.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to these thy servants who have presented their children here this morning, a more spiritual and enlarged sense of God's goodness to them in their children. And we pray that their lives may be precious in thy sight. Yet, if thou hast it in thy heart to take them, prepare thy servants to give back again to God that which hath been theirs for a little time.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all those in our midst who have been spectators, and who have been in sympathy, as members of this church, with the consecration of these children. Be with parents who have thought of their own babes, of their own little ones, and of their own children grown up. Grant to them, we beseech of thee, the saving influence of thy Spirit, and the blessings thereof. And may their hearts be made rich in their children. Or, if they are disciplined therein, and they bear burdens and carry pains in them, then all the more we pray that their trouble may be sanctified to them, and that they may be made strong by that life which they must needs live. May they take up the cross, heavy though it may be; and, taking it, may they find redemption in it when they are lifted upon it.

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that the homes of all those who are in thy presence may be sanctified, and that the blessing of God may abide in them. We pray that thou wilt give light to those who are in darkness, that thou wilt give patience to those who are taxed and tried, and that thou wilt enable every one to lean upon thee, and not upon his own reason and judgment of thy providence. May we have a supreme trust in the wisdom and goodness of God. May we resign ourselves to thy providences, knowing that thou canst not do wrong, and that it is in thy heart now, as it will be in the ages to come, to consult the glory of thy goodness, and that yet the universe shall break forth into blossom. And the time when thy kingdom shall have begun; the future, when the time of the singing of birds shall have come, and all thy royal host shall be filled with joy and happiness—O Lord our God, how shall we look upon these things out of the darkness of the present, that yet groans and travels with pain? How shall we look upon the earth given up to such beggarliness and degradation as we see around us, where man is so low, and so poor, and so helpless, and is so much a sufferer, beaten, and bruised, and yoked, and dragged hither and thither, and despised, and condemned! Dear Jesus, dost thou see it? Thou that wert so merciful in the Jerusalem of old, what art thou in the new Jerusalem? Where is thy heart? Where is that power which thou didst show was given unto thee of the Father? Reach forth thine hand, O thou crowned One (for now thou art wearing the crown of glory, though thou didst wear a crown of thorns). The whole earth before thee is bent and bowed down with suffering, which we dare not question, nor probe, nor sound, nor behold. Thou of the suffering heart; thou who by blood didst redeem the world, O remember the ages, and bring forth the latter-day glory, in thine own time! And let not our impatience anger thee. Be thou not weary because we are short-sighted, and do not know thy ways. Suffer us to wish and to pray that the time may be cut short in which Satan shall reign; in which selfishness shall desolate the earth: in which that which is animal in man shall have dominion over that which is divine. We pray that thou wilt bring to pass those glorious days of prediction which walk so slow, which yet are so dim, but whose promise is so comforting. O, what shall be their coming, when all the earth shall know thee; when all men shall learn the lesson of divine love; when joy and gladness shall wing their way round and round the globe! Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And now, we commend to thee every one in thy presence this morning, and pray that thou wilt draw near to each individually, to sympathize, to succor, and to enlighten. We ask not for joy in the present, but for that which shall be the cause of joy by-and-by. Rebuke us, pierce us, pain us in this world, if that be best. Thy will be done! We pray that thou wilt grant that we may look upon ourselves, upon our households, upon all our possessions, upon our name and fame, upon everything that we have, or hope to have, and say, from the heart, "Thy will, O Father of all love and mercy, be done."

We pray that thus thou wilt lighten burdens; that thus thou wilt clear away darkness from eyes that are dimmed with sorrow; that thus thou wilt make contentment where there is repining; that thus thou wilt bring peace where there is tumult and distress.

We pray that every one in thy presence may be able, to-day, to utter some thanksgiving; to lay down some burden; to feel the restorative influence of some remedy, from thy thought and thy heart.

We pray for the strangers who are among us, that they may feel at home in the worshiping of this brotherhood; that they may feel that wherever Christ is manifested to them, there comes joy and peace. And may their backward-looking thoughts be blessed, and bear, as angel thoughts, mercies

to those whom they have left behind. Though far separated by continents and by oceans from their children, their companions, and their dear friends, yet they are very near to them if they are near to thee; for thou art everywhere, and thou bearest our thoughts, bleasest them, and makest them multiply in mercies.

We commend to thee all that are dear to us wherever they may be. We pray that thou wilt remember all who labor in word and doctrine, in lands far away, or in desolate portions of our own land. Remember all who, in obscurity and humility, are laboring for the cause of Christ. We pray that none may be discouraged. We pray that there may be vouchsafed to all such a whispering of the presence of God, and such consolation of the divine Spirit, that they shall rejoice to suffer with Christ. And we pray that they may work, hoping for their reward, not here, but when they shall see Christ as he is in heaven.

May thy blessing rest upon all who are sick; upon all who are with the sick; upon all who are detained by any providence from the meeting of thy people to-day. And we pray that thou wilt bear to their houses and homes a portion of the truth and comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Bless those that are in our Sabbath-schools—the little ones, and those that are grown up. May those that are teaching them be inspired to teach in the very spirit of their Master. Bless all the efforts of this church to redeem men from sin; to enlighten the ignorant; to console the troubled; to do the Master's work more and more. We pray that thou wilt reward those who so labor by giving them disinterestedness; by giving them joy in the work itself; by discrowning their self-seeking pride; by bringing them into the humility of Jesus Christ; and by preparing them for that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And when we shall have served thee and thy cause enough, and are prepared, in thine eye, to be transplanted into the garden of the Lord, give us leave to go and be forever thy children.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou bless the word spoken? Teach us the secret of thy love. Bring us into sympathy with it. We know how far we are from it. We know what discipline we require before we are brought to it. We follow Him that was crowned with thorns. We follow by tears, by groans, by sufferings. If any go by easier roads, how much more dost thou require of them! Grant that all, wherever they are, may follow Christ. And if it be not through shame, if it be not through outward suffering and loss, yet may all of us know how to renounce ourselves, and how to consecrate our power to the welfare of those with whom we live. May our thought be how to do good, and how to serve men, and not how they shall serve us and increase our bounty.

Bless us, we pray thee, in the remaining hours of the day. May this be a joyful Sabbath, and may we hear thy voice, all the time and everywhere. Be with us through all our life. And at last bring us to see thy face. And then, though those lips shall be silent, and the language of earth shall be forgotten, our souls shall lift themselves up to praise thee, and to rejoice in thee forever and ever, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

THE NATURE OF LIBERTY.

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."—JOHN xv. 15.

This is unquestionably a contrast between an enforced and a free religious condition. It is a transfer from a life compelled by fear, through conscience, to a life that is inspired and made spontaneous by love. The strength of the phrase does not come out in that term *servant*. It is *slave* in the original. To be sure, the condition represented by the term *slave* was not at that time marked so sharply by the contrast of its misery with surrounding circumstances, as it is in our own day; nevertheless, it was a condition to be deprecated; and throughout the Scripture it is spoken of both as a misfortune and a disgrace. Our Savior looked upon his disciples as if they had, as Jews, and as worshipers after the manner of their fathers, been tied up in a kind of bondage. He was a member of the Jewish commonwealth, and was of the Jewish church; he had never separated himself from any of its ordinances or observances, but was walking as the fathers walked; and his disciples were bound not only to the Mosaic ritual, but to him as a kind of Rabbi; as a reform teacher, but nevertheless a teacher under the Jewish scheme. And so they were servants—slaves; they were rendering an enforced obedience. But he said to them, "Henceforth I shall not call you my servants—persons obeying me, as it were, from compulsion, from a sense of duty, from the stress of a rigorous conscience; I shall now call you *friends*." And he gives the reason why. A servant is one who receives orders, and is not admitted to conference. He does not know about his lord's affairs. His lord thinks first about his own affairs, and when he has consummated his plans, he gives his directions; so that all the servant has to do is to obey. But a friend sits in counsel with his friend, and bears a part in that friend's thinking and feeling, and in the

determinations to which he comes; and Christ said to his disciples "You come into partnership with me hereafter, and you stand as friends, on a kind of equality with me. There is to be liberty between you and me hereafter."

Christ, then, raised men from religion as a bondage to religion as a freedom. I do not like the word *religion*; but we have nothing else to take its place. It signifies, in the original, to *bind*, to *tie*. Men were bound. They were under obligations, and were tied up by them. Christianity is something more than religion—that is, religion interpreted in its etymological sense, and as it is popularly esteemed. Christianity is religion developed into its last form, and carries men from necessity to voluntariness—from bondage to emancipation. It is a condition of the highest and most normal mental state, and is ordinarily spontaneous and free. This is not an accidental phrase. In the eighth chapter of John we shall find our Master speaking in this wise, to the disputing Jews and Pharisees of the temple:

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant [slave] of sin. And the servant [slave] abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you free [emancipate you], ye shall be free indeed."

They were talking about an external civil condition, and he was talking of an interior, psychologic, spiritual condition; but the thought is precisely the same in either case—namely, that if you become adherents of the Son and heir, who has power, you with him shall inherit his liberty.

The apostle Paul speaks often of this matter. In the second chapter of Corinthians, he says: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." In the eighth chapter of Romans he speaks of the "glorious liberty" into which "the children of God" shall be brought.

And the law of liberty is familiar to the mouth of James. I need not go into a citation of the numerous passages which are employed in the Epistles, to show how much that idea rested on the minds of the apostles, and how emphatic and important it was in their ministration—the idea, namely, that Christians had come to liberty.

They were cautioned against a misunderstanding of it. It was not liberty to do what they had a mind to, that was meant. It was not liberty to run into licentiousness. It was not to be a cloak for misdeeds of every kind. It was not *antinomianism*, as it

is called in modern phrase. Yet they were free men. Their bondage was broken. Their yokes were taken off. The doors of their prison-house were opened. Their hands were loosed. They were brought into freedom. They were established in a new relation. They had a new life. A more glorious joy streamed from their experience. And it was all around the center of liberty.

Has Christianity in our own time this aspect? When you look over the whole body of Christian churches, and sects, and denominations, is it the first impression on the minds of Christians that they are brought into this noble condition of liberty? I know that it is not. I know that men enter upon the Christian life as upon a life of onerous duty. The common phrase is, that they are to "take up their cross, and follow Christ." They enlist in religion, as soldiers, hard pressed for a livelihood, enlist in the army, as the least of two evils. Men do not want to be lost; they do not want to be under condemnation all the time; they would be glad to have a spiritual life-insurance policy; they are willing to comply with the conditions as far as they can; and they get under the shelter of the church in order to be safe. But when men are once sheltered in the church, what is the popular impression in regard to their condition? What is the feeling, ordinarily, among church-members, taking one church with another, up and down through the land? Is it that religion brings to men release, or larger liberty than they had before? On the contrary, is it not that they are put upon a course of more narrowly watching their conduct, and that therefore they are circumscribed in their freedom? Is it not that they are restrained on the right and on the left? Do not men, when they become Christians, oftentimes become precisionists? And do not their companions and acquaintances say of them, "What side boughs these men used to have! How their branches used to hang down to the ground, and give them grace and beauty! But now they have been trimmed up, and are long-legged trees. Perhaps at the top there is something that is worth having; but all that which made them agreeable and companionable has been cut away." Is it not the impression that a glorious good fellow is spoiled when he goes into the church? Is it not often said of a man, when he has become a church-member, "He used to be free-hearted and open-handed, and ready for social life; but now he mopes, and keeps on a long face, and is all the time thinking of Sundays, and Bibles, and such things as those. He is not by any means the man that he was. I do not enjoy him half so much as I used to when he did not pretend to be religious"? Is there not such a feeling as this current in the community?

Is this the fulfillment of the promise? Is it that which Christ promised—freedom? Is it that which the apostle rejoiced in—liberty? Is it that which men are taught that they are to have by reason of being sons of God—heirship? Are not men, when they become Christians, yoked and harnessed? Are they not all the while tugging in the traces on the path of duty? Are they not continually doing things because they feel that they *ought to*? Is Sunday to them a glorious day of liberty? Is the Bible, as they look upon it, a portal which opens the temple of liberty? Do they regard prayer as a blessed prerogative of liberty? Is your life, Christian, every day infolded in a large, clear, singing liberty? Do your children look upon you as being better, happier, richer, in every way more a man than others who are not Christians? Is that the impression which is entertained about you by your neighbors? Is it the idea of men, when they look upon the church, that it is a place of more ample freedom? Do men, when they go into the church feel, “I have lived in this little hut of sin long enough, and I am going to move out of it into the palace of righteousness;” or do they feel, “I have lived in the mansion of sin as long as it is safe, and now I am going into the little hut of righteousness?” They say, “I am going to become a Christian, and in becoming a Christian I shall enter into a state of limitation and circumscription, but I am willing to suffer a little for the sake of insuring my eternal salvation. I am willing to go into the church a little while, for the sake of going to heaven by-and-by, and dwelling there forever and ever.”

What is the popular impression of religion? It is that it is a necessary evil. It is that it results in many cases in that which is good, but that, in the main, men insure their souls much as they do their houses. They do not want to pay out their money, but they would rather do that than have their houses burned up, and get nothing for them.

Now, what is the nature of liberty? We shall throw some light, I think, upon the thoughts and practices of men, if we can come to an understanding of the root of this matter. What is your idea of liberty? Do you regard it as an exemption from bondage where a man exercises authority over you without having any right to do it? Do you understand that it is a special kind of liberty, as where one is set free from obedience to an intrusive government or a foreign power, by legislation or by an appeal to armed force? We know what it is to be liberated from such bondage. But what is liberty in its most comprehensive sense, as applied to the universal human family? Is it doing just what you

please? Well, yes, when you please to do everything right, but never otherwise. When you please upward, the law is liberty: when you please downward, it is bondage.

What, then, is liberty? It is the condition of men who understand the laws which surround them and govern them completely and surely, and who submit to those laws. It is the condition of submission and obedience to all the laws which God has laid upon men. You cannot make anything else out of it. It is submission with cheerful spontaneity in regard to God's primary constituent laws in society and in the material world. A man who knows what these laws are, and respects them, and heartily and fully obeys them, is free; and every time a man, from ignorance or indisposition, fails to obey one of these laws, he becomes a slave of that law. No man is free who does not ride laws. No man is free whom laws ride. The fundamental idea of liberty is not that of throwing off law—although we have derived that impression from oppressive physical laws. In a general sense, liberty means finding out and obeying laws. God's constitution of men and life is, that they receive their largest expansion in certain ways, and that these ways are marked out by divine laws; and he is freest who knows them most perfectly, accepts them most cheerfully, and gives to them the most plenary obedience. Nobody is free who does not know them, or who, knowing them, refuses to obey them.

Take physical laws, for example. Who is the free workman? It is the man that has learned the perfect use of his members, and the nature of the material which he has in hand, whether it be wood, or stone, or iron, or leather, so that he instinctively deals with each according to the laws which govern it, and employs his tools and implements according to their laws. The manipulation is not a thing of volition. He has learned it. It has worked into his unconscious condition. It is an involuntary action. And, looking at him as he works, we say, "What a facile worker!" When he begins to saw a scroll, how he saws with all his body—his legs, and arms, and every other part! How the saw wanders from the line! How hard it is for him to do the work! But by-and-by, when, after having compelled his muscles to submit to the law of the muscles, he takes the saw, it runs round and round, and you can scarcely follow it with your eye, so glibly does it run, and so deftly does he handle it.

Take the act of fencing. Look at the bungling boy who takes the rapier and squares himself off in an ungainly manner, and holds up his awkward hand, and tries to parry the blow; and see how, as quick as a flash, his sword flies into the air. On the other

hand, look at the master. See how naturally, and gracefully, and easily the rapier moves, as upon an axis. It is no labor for him to handle it. He does it without any trouble—he does not do it; it does itself. And how did he come to this dexterity? By subduing himself to the laws that are involved in that action. When he became thoroughly obedient to natural law, when he, as it were, enslaved himself to that law, he found perfect liberty—perfect facility.

Suppose a man should say, “I won’t walk according to the way in which my muscles were made to work: my muscles have got to work in another way?” The moment his muscles do work in another way, he is in the hospital. There is no liberty in the unnatural use of the muscles. He that would walk, must walk according to the laws of walking which were born in him. He that would work must work according to the laws that are wrapped up under his skin. It is submission to laws, it is facility of obedience to them, it is the habit of obeying them, wrought into spontaneity, that gives a man liberty, and power, and worth. And out of liberty come fruit and prosperity.

The same is true in respect to study. He that would study can invent no new ways. He has to use his faculties as they were made to be used. He has to have some knowledge of his construction, and of the method of acquiring knowledge, and then there must be a ready acceptance of this method and a following it out. This runs through the whole nature of men. As modern philosophy has shown that the whole stellar universe is a unit of the same general structure and of the same general laws, so it may be said that there is a corresponding unit in the minds of men; that the whole of human life is a unit; that that which is common to the body and the lower forms of mind is true of the moral sentiments. As men are educated in intellectual matters, in mathematics, in arithmetic, in all physical subjects, by drill, by certain methods of development, so it is with conscience, and faith, and hope, and love. So it is with all that which we call the development of religious experience. The moral sentiments are subject to precisely the same laws of education that all the rest of the faculties of the human soul are. And in proportion as a man knows the laws that relate to his whole being, and accepts them, and becomes facile in obedience to them, in that proportion he opens himself up in a large sphere, and becomes a child, not of restriction, and not of doing that which he ought to do, but a child of liberty.

In the next place, we see why it is that in the New Testament certain symbols are employed, and that there is a seeming contra-

diction between them. On the one hand, religion is called a "glorious light and liberty." On the other hand, we hear the Saviour saying, "Except a man shall take up his cross daily and follow me, he is not worthy of me, and shall not enter into the kingdom of God. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Nevertheless it is a yoke, and it is a burden; and how is this to be reconciled with the "light and liberty of the sons of God?" Why, there is not a boy in school that cannot tell you how it is.

When I first began to study algebra, if there was anything more nebulous—no, more absolutely dark—than those abstract algebraic signs, I should like to know what it was. The study was dry; but I moistened it with my tears! I had spurs and motives of other sorts to help me; but in the beginning, if there ever was a prison, if there ever were chains, if any man was ever bent under a despotic lash, I was in prison, I wore chains, and I was bent under a despotic lash, when I began algebra. But after a few weeks I saw a little light; and after a few months I began to understand the subject.

You talk about being "born again." No man ever becomes a scholar who is not born again. There is a time when it flashes on the young mind that it has power to cope with difficulty, and of its own self to overcome obstacles. The moment when a boy or a girl feels, "I can subdue these difficulties," the intellect of that boy or girl is born again; and from that time the way is comparatively easy.

I remember the glorious hour when I was delivered from the bondage of *I can't*, and born into the glorious liberty of *I can*: and it has never left me since. That was a conversion which stood without backsliding. And after six months I became very vain of my algebraic skill, so that I longed, when the examination came, to have the hardest problems given to me. But I remember that when the questions were given out, one of the easiest—I have forgotten what it was—came to me, and I wanted to cry. The problem of "the couriers" was the hardest, and I wanted it, but it did not come to me. I remember envying the boy that had "the couriers." In the beginning, the study of algebra was a bondage to me; but after the fight was over it was a liberty. Then I was the master. When I started, algebra was my master, and it rode me like a nightmare; but when I ended, I had it under my feet. It had to do what I wanted it should, then.

How is it in respect to the department of music? When Ru-

binstein first began to play, he played with awkward, hesitating movements, thinking of each separate note as he struck the keys. There was a great sweating time between the beginning and that period in which his hand was subdued to his musical will, so that the instrument was at his command, and he walked the high places of the earth, and outsang the birds, yea, and was friend to the mighty sounds of thunder and of storm. All this skill came to him through bondage—that, is practice—hard work. Out of work comes leisure, and out of bondage liberty. He that wants to be free must subdue bondage to get his freedom.

Therefore it is that when men first enter upon a Christian life, they enter upon it as a man enters upon an apprenticeship to a carpenter, or tinner, or shipmaster, or anybody else. When you are first converted, nothing takes place more than just to apprentice you to Christ. After a while you hear the Master saying to you, "Henceforth I call you not an apprentice, not a servant, but a friend." When you have learned certain elements of Christianity so that you manifest freely the Christian traits, and feel spontaneously the love of Christ, the Master says to you, "You are my friend."

When you begin the Christian life, it must be that you begin by taking up the cross; but you need not hunt for it. A great many persons think that they must do some special thing which is called "taking up the cross." In the family and in the church, the father and mother have been praying for the conversion of their children; and here is a high-headed, broad-browed girl that has come into a state of seriousness. She has been trained from her cradle to all Christian virtues and ethics, and she has sought, as long as she can remember, to act in accordance with such training. Her ideal has, for a great while, been to be a Christian woman, and now a serious feeling has come over her. As her father and mother have always been praying for her conversion, she feels that she ought to do something; but what to do she does not know. She wants to submit; but there is nothing that she can think of in which she has not already submitted. "Well, submit your heart." "I am willing to submit my heart if I only knew what that meant." "Well, lay down the weapons of your rebellion." "I never had any weapons of rebellion that I know of." "Well, you must be born again." She is more perplexed at that than Nicodemus was; and she comes into a state of turmoil. The fact is, that child has been brought up in a Christian way from her very infancy. She took up her cross when she was three years old. When she was five years old, the yoke and the burden were on her little neck, and

she has never known a time when they were not there. She has been harnessed by Christian parents ever since she was born. And at last she has come to the point where all that she wants is a little more illumination as to the beauty of Christ. Her very life has been a preparation for this momentary transition. And the idea that she must make believe that she is a heathen, and go through all the struggles that a heathen would need to go through to become a Christian, is monstrous. I am amazed that there should be such ignorance at this day.

I repeat, that men need not go about looking for a cross to take up when they are going to be Christians. Here is Christ's character, and here are Christ's commands: are you willing to conform to them? If you say that you are, and you make up your mind that you will, and you begin to do it, you are a Christian. You will find crosses enough to take up without seeking for them. If, when you go home, your servant is mad and saucy, and spits words in your face, as it were, and you are as mad as he is, and are willing to be as mean as he is, then there is your cross, and you must take it up, and you must serve an apprenticeship in bearing it until you can be reviled and not *feel like* reviling again. When the time comes that your servant is saucy, and you are equable, then there will be no cross for you in that direction.

What is the cross? Is it something that has been adopted as a token of slavery? Is it something that is suffered before one comes into a Christian life? Suffer just as much as it is necessary for you to suffer in order to be good and true. If you do not need to suffer to become so, then do not suffer. If you are naturally skillful of hand when you enter upon an apprenticeship, you do not need to go through the regular bungling stages that one who is unskillful of hand needs to go through. You have a right to all that you have in you. And where one has been living purely from the cradle, the change to a Christian tendency and disposition is very slight; but where one has been living in such a state that he is under the dominion of a violent temper, then the transition to a Christian life is very marked—the change is abrupt. When a man begins to follow Christ, he must strive as much, he must suffer as much pain, he must take up as much cross, and he must carry as much burden, as is necessary to enable him to follow Christ with ease and facility—that is all. When he has reached that point where he follows Christ involuntarily and spontaneously, then comes the other part—liberty.

When a man has learned how to do a thing, it becomes easy for him to do it; but when he has not learned how to do it, or has forgotten how to do it, it is hard for him.

When one has been sick, he goes back to childhood, as it were, in some of his experiences. If you had had the sciatica, you would know what facility in walking means, having lost it. I remember walking from this church to my house when that friend stuck closer than a brother to me. If I failed to step just so; if, stepping over a stone, I raised one foot a little higher than the other, the pain seized me, and cut me in two as with a red-hot knife. Therefore, I was very particular to see where I put my feet every time I moved them, placing one just so, and the other just so, and all the while balancing myself very carefully. But I am well now, and I do not walk so; stones that come in my way must take care of themselves. I do not think where I put my feet. I go right and left, up and down, everywhere, and have no trouble in walking. In other words, I have subdued myself to the laws of walking.

When a man begins a trade, a profession, any vocation, and especially a Christian life, he has to look where he puts his feet; and he has his ups and downs; he meets with difficulties on every hand; but as soon as by practice he has subdued himself to the laws which belong to this new life, it is easier to him than the old life was. More and more he goes toward a large way of liberty, not by becoming so good that he is not liable to fall into evil; not because he is licensed to be wicked on account of his goodness; not because he has laid aside the law; but because, having developed through obedience to the law a tendency to do the things which the law requires, he does them better than the law could have forced him to do them. And his condition is one of liberty.

We see, then, why liberty is not dangerous. We see why it has in it the highest safety. It is the expression, not of caprice, not of willfulness, not of pride, not of waywardness: it is the expression of drilled and perfected obedience to law. There is no better expression of it in the world than that of the Psalmist: "How love I thy law!" He *loved* it. It became necessary to his very being.

A great, rude, hulking boor comes into a school kept by a slender, pale, sweet-hearted young woman; he has determined that he will have his own way, and sit where he has a mind to, and kiss the girls when he has a mind to, and spit where he has a mind to, and do every ungainly, gawky and brutal thing that he has a mind to. For a week or two there is a sad time between them; but there is that in her which awes the brute in him. There is that in her which, like the morning twilight, awakes out of his night all sweet forms of thought; and he is mad with himself, but does not know why. He finds that he does not want to do the things that he thought he would do; and he cannot tell why. At last, after a

month has gone, he watches her eye; and one beck is enough. He is moved this way or that, as she wishes. He would kiss the hem of her garment. He worships her. There is nothing that he would not do for her. Why? Because she has stirred up in his innermost soul the noblest elements that are there, and he loves her. Love is absolute despotism, and absolute liberty. And it is not dangerous; for he never was so free as since he has been under her rule. He has learned to follow her higher nature. He was the child of rude parents, and was brought up where drinking, and profanity, and all wickedness were common; and he had never before seen such a vision. After a while the sacred influence was felt, and he grew more and more toward things serene, and wise and beautiful, and was transformed thereby. And at last, when he found himself educated, and endowed with understanding, he said, "God sent his angel when I was in prison, and took me out of my darkness and bonds, and now I am a free man." Why? Because he had come to the noblest use of himself, under the highest law of his being.

Liberty is obedience to law. Therefore liberty is safe. And when a man becomes "a law unto himself," what is that but the expression of such a knowledge and such a drill in that which is designed for manhood, that he has accepted himself, and his conditions, and the laws which are obligatory upon him, and made himself so familiar with them that they act spontaneously in him, so that he does not need to read the Book, or ask the priest.

I remark, once more, that liberty develops in partialisms. It is gradually developed, and is developed on a high plane; so that men may be free in one part of their lives, and in bondage in the other parts. Men may be perfectly born to liberty in their taste, but not in their conscience. A man may be intellectually born to liberty, but not in his will. Some men are free in their lower nature, and yet in darkness in their higher. So that the work of their emancipation goes on, as it were, province by province, until the whole man becomes free in Christ Jesus. I merely state that head. I shall not illustrate it.

There is, in these expositions, light thrown upon the whole progress of religious life, as respects its usages and symbols and institutions. Men are taught that if they are Christians they ought to read the Bible. I say that just as long as a man is in an undeveloped and lower state, he ought to read his Bible. But the moment a man is developed into a true Christian liberty there is no *ought* about it. Then he is free in that matter; and he will read his Bible as much as he needs to; but he will not be obliged to read

it a bit more than he wants to. There are a great many persons who have a prison at home—their Bible; and they have to step into it every day. They have to do penance by reading the Bible morning and night; and after they have done it they feel relieved, and say, “There, I have read my chapter.” If they ever happen to forget it, it weighs on their conscience; and they say, “I declare, I was hurried, this morning, and I came to business without reading my Bible. God forgive me!”

Now, what kind of a life is that? Suppose I were living with my own son at home, where we were going through all the offices of everyday life in the same room—eating, and drinking, and working, and talking; and suppose he should get up and go out of the room without speaking to me, and should come back and say, “Father, forgive me: I did not say ‘Good morning’ when I went out!” I should open my eyes at him. I should feel insulted. If anybody loves me, he is free to speak or to be silent, as he feels inclined. If you are living on terms of perfect love and confidence with anybody, liberty is the characteristic of your relations to him, and you are not called upon to talk just so much, and at just such times.

A child sits sewing with her mother, and the mother is wrapped in thoughts that do not lead her to conversation; and the child is wrapped in her own thoughts; so they sit together the whole evening, and there do not a dozen words pass between them. And some precise, critical person says, “Great affection that, between mother and daughter! They have been sitting together nearly two hours, and they have not spoken three sentences. That is what you call *love*, is it?”

One is asked, “Did you say your prayers to-day?” No; I did not!” “Great pity! You ought to have done it.” Why ought he? Do you suppose I am bound to talk to my God when I do not feel like it? Do you suppose I am under a service more exacting in my relations to my heavenly Father than a child is in his relations to his earthly parent, or than a friend is in his relations to a friend? If I am not in a mood to talk to you, you do not lose confidence in me. If I am in a mood to be taciturn, you do not blame me. And if I am not in a mood to talk with God, he understands that mood, and says to me, “Son, you are not a slave. You are not obliged to talk unless you wish to. You are my friend. Be silent; I shall understand it.”

Pray, if you feel like it; and keep silent if you do not. Do not *make believe* in the matter of praying. Do not make machinery of prayer. Let it be spontaneous. Let it be an expres-

sion of a real want in you. Many pray a hundred times too much, because they do not pray at all. There is a nation—the Tartars, I think—that have a big wheel in which they put papers with prayers written on them, and they turn the wheel round, and the wind takes these written prayers and carries them up and off. We have a twenty-four hour wheel, and as it whirls, out of one notch comes one prayer, and out of another comes another. That kind of praying is all right for them that like it. They are at liberty to have it if it is their preference. I say, however, that you are not bound to adopt that mode unless you want to. “But,” it is said, “does not experience show that regularity in prayer is desirable?” It may be that it does in some cases. If your experience shows that praying by the watch does you more good than any other method, it is your liberty to pray in that way. But if another man’s experience shows that he must wait for the moving of the waters, that the tides must determine when he shall pray, and when he shall not, then it is his liberty to act accordingly. I never could pray chronologically or horologically. I used to try it, but it would not do for me. How much valuable, precious time have I wasted because I did not know that I was God’s son, and that I was at liberty to go to my Father when I had an errand, and stay away from him when I had not; that I was free to pray if I desired to, but that otherwise I was not under obligation.

There are some men who have to promote piety by having a prayer for every hour. If any man really requires such regularity and frequency of prayer; if he is a multiplication table with the skin pulled over it, let him pray so. It is his liberty; and why do you rail at it? But if a man is made as I am, he could not do it. Nothing would extinguish the full play of my affections and of my imagination—which is my faith in God, by which I interpret him—so effectually as being compelled to observe hours and regularities. I am not regular in anything else, and how could I be in such things?

What I wish to say is, not that you are not to pray, but that you are Christ’s friends—not his servants and slaves. You are not marshalled before him as soldiers are in a fort at the tap of the drum, and at the sound of a trumpet, such as I hear every morning, across the waters from Governor’s Island, at five o’clock, and pity the poor wretches that it calls to duty. You are not under the drill of a military despotism. Your God stands as large as summer, and as generous. Do you suppose that the summer scolds at the flowers, and says, “Here, violets! come

forth; ho, daffodils! why don't you come out?" Has not the plant liberty to take time to grow up from its root, and blossom? The sun smiles on the asters, and the rains wet them, though they may not choose to blossom until the very winter comes in to tip their starlike forms with early frosts. And do you suppose that nature is more free with her bounties than God is with his? I would not say anything to discourage you from reading your Bible. I think that reading the Bible is one of the most precious of privileges; and if you do not want to read it, then I think you ought to be made to read it; but if you do want to read it, then you need not.

It is in religion as it is in finance, as illustrated by the story of the Frenchman, who, fearing that he would lose his money, went to the bank where he had deposited it, and said, "I must have my money!" "All right; here it is." "Oh! if you haven't got it I must have it; but if you have got it I don't want it." It is precisely so with the knowledge of things spiritual. He that knows nothing must be taught. He that is unspiritual must be drilled. He that is undeveloped must be kept under rules. And if it be found that regular methods are best for those that are raw recruits, let them be trained according to those methods. But is there not a time when a man shall be set free from these things?

A ground is taken in respect to liturgies, and symbolisms, and church institutions, and Sabbath days, and holidays. It is your liberty to have a Sabbath every day of the week, if you find that it is good for you; but it is not your liberty to force it on anybody else. It is also your liberty to let it alone. It is your liberty to have written prayers, that not only represent the want of the present time, but that represent universal want, and that are the glorious accumulations of the experience of ages, coming down to us, and expressing, not our sighings alone, but the groanings of the whole creation; but who shall say that it is my imperative duty to employ such prayers?

Men say that a priest should wear white; and then that he should wear black; and then that he should wear symbols of the cross; and that he should face the east in certain things, and that he should turn his back to the congregation in other things. A man has a perfect right to turn his back to his congregation if he chooses; I think it is better in the case of many a man that he should turn his back; and why should you take away his liberty? But when he says to me, "You must do so too," I say, "To my own Master, sir, I stand or I fall." I will not wear a robe. It is my liberty not to do it. I will not wear black nor white,

as a symbol. But do I revile symbols? No. And I would not deny them to those that want them. I am fond of symbols of certain kinds. God is the Author of my symbols. He is my officiating Helper. He is my priestly Servant. He brings in the morning full-flushed with symbols. He revolves the world, and every sound in it is symbolic to me. He spreads out the summer. He brings all the group of birds that make music through the woods and fields. And is there one of these things that has not some spiritual message for me? Is there one cloud of all those caravans that sweep through the heavens that does not teach me some lesson? Is there aught in thunder or in silence that does not bring to me some intimation of universal symbolism? What temple is like that in which I worship? Where is the palace that is for one moment to be compared to that dwelling which God has consecrated and made sacred, whither my mother has sped, to which my children have gone, and in which dear ones are hovering above me? Everything is symbolic to me.

I bring a few flowers to my platform as souvenirs of larger gardens. Sweet beloved companions are they, which come smiling and taking away sadness of spirit. You are not bound to have them on your platform, or in your house; but it is my liberty to have them here. They are not put here particularly because they are symbols of purity, or of modesty, or of anything else. This little flower, that had such a hard time to be born, I see, and that is not quite born on the top, does not symbolize anything to me. It simply smells good and looks pretty; and that is what it is here for. Some say, "It signifies grace and humility: don't you see how it bows down?" Very well, let it bow down. It is your liberty to make it signify humility to you, though it may signify nothing of the sort to me.

He who wants to worship in a Gothic cathedral, and wants a priest to say his prayers for him, and wants that priest to be clothed in certain habiliments, and wants to have service at matins and vespers, has a right to these things. There is no reason why I should say anything against them. But he must not insist upon others having them. And you must not suppose that a man who has to walk on crutches all his life is to be compared with that man who does not have to walk on crutches. If a man is so low in development that spirituality is dead in him, so that he has to prop and buttress himself up by sensuous helps, we must rank him, and say, "He is a man that is crude, as yet"—though we may not say it condemning him. A man may say, "It is easier for me to worship so and so." Yes, it is easier for you; and therefore it is

right for you. A man says, "I worship better in this way." Very well, if you worship better that way, worship that way.

I go out with a friend to look at a landscape; and I say to him, "Is it not beautiful—that slope, that vale, those rugged hills, and that silver river?" He puts on his spectacles, and begins to look. I look with open eyes, and see the landscape unobstructed: he looks, and sees it through his spectacles. What is the difference between us? My eyes are better than his. I say, "You have to look through glasses, and that is all right; but, so far, your eyes are imperfect."

When a man looks at God through symbols of worship, and I look at him without the help of symbols, he is near-sighted, and I am long-sighted. If you tell me that it is apostolicity on your side, I say that it is God on mine; and I will pit God against the apostles, the whole of them. Do not be in bondage. Do not fear to help yourself by symbols. If your nature, if your disposition, if the development of your religious life, leads you to this or that form of worship, accept it; only, he who knows how to worship God as a Spirit, in spirit and in truth, certainly stands higher, and stronger, and more perfectly developed, than he who has to worship God through the help of various symbols. Symbols are for youth. They are for the uncultured. They are for those who yet depend on their senses. They are for those who are low in the scale of faith. They are beneficent and blessed, oftentimes, to those who are in such a state that they need such things to aid them in worship.

I have sat in village Episcopal churches in England, and had an unusual access of faith, and love, and hope, through symbols. They were more powerful to me than to those who commonly worshipped there, because they were new to me; because they came to me but once in the course of five or ten years, and came as though they dropped out of heaven; while to them they came every day, and therefore could not have that novelty to them that they had to me.

I do not condemn these things; I do not dissuade you from them; I commend them to you as useful under some circumstances; but they are rounds of a ladder; they are stairs—do not sit down on them. Use them; but every time you put your foot on one, remember that it is only a means by which you are to step up to the next, and that you are to go on higher and higher, until you have ascended to the chamber which you seek. Here are these symbolic ladders, and there are men roosting on them all the way from the bottom to the top. There are men that accept a ritualistic

worship, and couch down on it, and will not go on ; and you shall find many to-day just where they were twenty years ago.

Now, you are called to liberty. These things are to help you in your education. They are to enlarge you. They are to give you wider scope. If they narrow you, if they circumscribe your sphere, if they keep you in the same spot, then to you they are not instruments of liberty, but instruments of bondage.

I will not pursue this subject further. I wish only, in closing, to call your attention to how much the power of true religion is diminished, in that the liberty of religion is so little understood. The largeness which belongs to Christian manhood, the freedom of it, its elasticity, and the variety which there should be in it, men are sadly ignorant of.

There is not a thing in you that God did not put there on purpose. There is not a wheel in your make-up that has not a right to revolve. Every part of your being is a servant of God. Therefore there is not a part of himself that a Christian man should not develop. The apostle prays that "your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless." Grace, strength, skill, and beauty belong to you, and ought to be used by you as a Christian, for the cause of your Master. Your passions and appetites, all your lower natural propensities, are right in their place ; but your affections and moral sentiments are to blossom, and are to manifest themselves in poetry, and oratory, and music, and in every sphere of life.

"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof ;" and the Lord is my Father ; and as all things belong to him, I own everything that is above me and beneath me ; and I have a right to the largest personal liberty ; and no priest nor anybody else has any right to stand up and say to me, "Why do you not do so and so ?" To my own Master I stand or fall.

But my liberty must be a liberty that exercises itself in the sphere of divine love. It must be an expression of all that is in me ; but it must be such an expression, it must be an expression so large, so glad, and so joyous, it must be an expression so noble and so enduring that there shall not be any doubt about its rightfulness.

There is much talk as to whether the Bible is inspired. What I want to see is inspired *men*. Men are talking about the evidences of Christianity. Ye are the epistles, if there are any. There cannot be an argument for a dead Christianity, and there need not be one. If there is a live Christianity, show me the man that wants to doubt it. Do you make yourself a friend to tho

poor, ministering to their wants? Nobody wants to doubt that. Do you love even when you are hated? Nobody wants to deny that. Are you, with all long-suffering patience and kindness, doing good to them that spitefully use you and persecute you? Nobody wants to doubt that, if it be so. Living, abiding Christian benevolence is not a thing for debate. There are some things that appeal, not to the reason, but to the emotions. You might write ever so much about music, and not be understood nor believed; but let Mr. Zundel play an inspiring strain of music on the instrument, and you will not doubt its power to affect the soul. It carries conviction in itself. It has intrinsic merits which cannot but be recognized.

We are never going to make head against skepticism except by giving to human life such a development that all men shall see that there is no other idea of manhood comparable to it—and such a development will be the victory, the triumph of the cross of Christ.

Oh, that we had such lives as that!—and in some measure we have. Do not you know that when you go to teach, it is not the open Book, but you, that is the Gospel to your pupils. The printer made the Bible, but God made you. That is ink and paper—that is the letter; but the Spirit is in you. The letter killeth; but the spirit maketh alive. If you be kind, and patient, and considerate, and unfailing in gentleness and devotion toward those who cannot repay you, then men will understand what you mean when you say that Christ “gave his life a ransom for many;” and out of you they will learn what it is to look up and adore a Saviour who is “God over all, blessed forever.”

Oh, that we might rise into this large liberty of an educated and perfect obedience—into this “glorious light and liberty of the sons of God,” who by love have been perfected in the things which are pleasing to God, and best for men!



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we have reason to thank thee for thy great condescension, and for that bounty which thou art granting unto us through the ministration of thy laws, by day and by night, in summer and in winter, in storms and in calms, by rudeness and by gentleness, by prosperity and by adversity. By all influences thou art plying our many-sided natures, knocking at the door of our souls, and seeking to enter in. Thou art, O Lord our God, gracious unto us. A Teacher and a Father art thou. More bountiful, more patient, more long-suffering, more kind, and more loving than earthly parents know how to be to their children, is our God to us. For all that thou art, as revealed to us by what thou art doing, we rejoice, and render

thee thanks. We thank thee for those hours in which by faith we have glimpses of thee, so that heaven is bright, and the earth is bright, and hope is elate. We rejoice that even in darkness we have a confidence that, like an anchor in the storm, holds us steadfast, till the waves subside, and the clouds are cleared away. We rejoice in thy presence. We rejoice that we are permitted to commune with thee. We rejoice that in our solitary hours thou dost meet us in thy Word. As one walks in a garden, and enjoys its sweet fragrance, and is surrounded by all the amplitude of its stores, so we walk in thy Word, and take pleasure in all its sweet delights. We rejoice to find thee there so often, though sometimes we see thee and know thee not, and think it is the gardener, and that thou art gone.

O Lord, we thank thee for all the ministration of thy mercy to us in our homes; in our closets; in our solitary walks and meditations; in the strife of business; in perplexities; in labors in overmeasure; in difficulties; in sadness. We thank thee for thy presence in joy and in sorrow; in fullness and in barrenness; in hours when we are uplifted, and in hours when we are cast down; when we are on the mount of transfiguration, and when we are at the base of the mountain where demoniac spirits rage.

We rejoice that thou art all to all, and in all. We rejoice that every want seeks thee, and that every pain calls out to thee. We rejoice that even our unconscious yearnings and breathings are movings of thy Spirit in us.

And now, Father, we do not know the way. We believe that thou art the way; but we do not understand thee perfectly. Yet we do know enough of thee to feel the yearnings and drawings of thy heart. We are taught of thee. We cannot pluck ourselves away from thee if we would. We rejoice in thee, and pray that we may be bound still more closely to thee, and that we may feel the inspiration of thy presence, and that we may, with all the power of imagination, gather up those things which are brightest, most beautiful, and most to be desired—all that is glorious in excellence, and that the testimony of mankind hath shown to be best in man. May we bring around about us, and clothe ourselves in, and rejoice over, those elements which are allied to thy nature. Interpret thyself to us by the shining of the sweet Spirit. By the light of the sun thou makest all things to appear. Without that light we should not know one thing from another. What things are pure, and what things are delicate, and what things are bright, and what things are beautiful, we can know, not by our feeling, but only by the shining of the sun. And we pray that thou wilt so shine into us that we may rejoice in the knowledge of God, and in our communion with thee.

We pray that thou wilt accept the thanks of those that are gathered together to-day, conscious of thy great mercy to them. Some have come because they are recipients of thy bounty; some, because they have new-found love; some, because they are objects of sparing mercy; some, because children have come back to them that seemed lost; some, because those who have been separated are reunited; some, because death hath fled away; some, because they have survived a stormy voyage; some, because they have heard tidings from afar of God's great goodness to those whom they love; some, because thou hast delivered them from the hand of violence; some, because thou hast taken fear away; some, because remorse has gone. O Lord, look upon the many-sided joy and gratitude of thy servants, and help them to speak their emotions in thine ear, and feel the rebound of thy heart throb toward them.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to those who are in sorrow, and would speak to thee. If they sigh, be thou in their sighing. If they are sad, be thou in their sadness. Be gentle with them, as thou didst teach thy

disciples to be with each other, and with those whom they were sent to instruct. Bear with them in their struggles, and be merciful to them in their unmeasured griefs.

We pray that thou wilt be with those who sit in the shadow of darkness to-day. Wilt thou make them feel that they are not alone? Though there may not be one to whom they may speak; though they may not be able to speak even to those who are nearest and dearest to them what they think and feel, let their hearts lie open before thee. **And may they be comforted.** May the light of thy countenance bring sweet tranquillity to their souls. And though they know not why, may they rest to-day in the Lord.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be with those who ask thy help in bearing the burdens of life; in discriminating between right and wrong; in determining what is duty; in struggling for the fulfilment of painful duties.

Help, we pray thee, those who are screening themselves from their adversaries. Help those who are tempted more than they can bear. Help all those who are in battle, and know not when the stroke may fall upon them.

Grant, we beseech of thee, that every one may put on the whole armor of God and be valiant, and patient, and, having done all, stand.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt clothe thy people with more and more of thy free Spirit. Help them to go forth more lordly, since they are sons of God. Everywhere may they have victory over evil, and more and more be fortified in truth and goodness.

We pray for thy blessing to rest upon all those who are kept from us to-day, upon those whose thoughts turn toward the sanctuary, but who, by sickness, by watching with the sick, or by troubles, are kept at home. May their home not be dark. As there is light from the altar to thy throne, so may there be light from the sanctuary of their houses to thy heart. Visit them; and may there be a Gospel for them, even if it descend silently. As through the air the dews descend and fall upon flowers, so may thy blessing come to them to-day.

We pray that thou wilt bless our dear brethren that have worshiped with us who are far away. Bless those who preach the Gospel of Christ in every language, and under every phase. Bless all who everywhere seek to instruct their fellow-men.

Bless our own schools, and those who teach in them, and those that are taught. More and more may the hearts of this people be turned toward those who are less favored than themselves. May they carry peace, and purity, and love to those who are lacking. We pray that they may become teachers and benefactors to all who are around about them.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the cause of God in every form. We pray for the world—not for the round terraqueous globe, but for thy dear creatures that are on it. Look upon those nations that sit in darkness; look upon barbarous and savage nations; look upon those nations where the truth has not yet shone; and also upon those Christian nations that are so unchristian.

We pray that wars and revolutions and oppressions may cease, and that all growths which carry blessings with them may take place, by the permissions of men, little by little, until thou shalt have consummated thy plan, whatever it may be, in the ages which are to come, and until the whole earth shall be brought up into victorious perfection.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE LOVE OF PRAISE.

“ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.”—**MATT. vi. 16-18.**

The frequent dissuasive exhortations of our Master on the subject of exhibitory piety, show how deeply the minds of his contemporaries were affected by this perverted form of the love of praise. That which, above all things, should be sincere—the heart's service toward God—had become a mere net to catch men's praise withal; and our Saviour here, as in other places, rebukes the outwardness of their piety, and teaches men rather simplicity, truthfulness.

The love of praise, for which men do so many things, which is the fertile cause of so much insincerity in religious observances, which was the occasion of so great corruption in the Jewish Church, and which has been a corrupting influence ever since—this is not in itself an evil. It is a constitutional trait. Its function is of transcendent importance. It tends to civilize men, and to harmonize them. It has a tendency to render the intercourse of society smoother, and to fill it with the minor forms of pleasure. Men who have no sense of what is agreeable to other men, grate harshly, jar sadly, upon them; but a sensibility to praise, when it is rightly educated and restrained, is the right hand of benevolence. It goes far to make life pleasant between men. It does much to restrain selfishness. It is the natural antagonist of that pride which wraps a man up in his own selfishness, and makes him sufficient for himself. It connects a man with his fellows, and makes their praise, which is his desire, turn upon his conduct. It perpetually influences what he does, since he wishes to appear in the sight of men to be kind and praise-deserving. So that, in due measure, and within proper bounds, it is a quality or trait of great moment. It

may be easily educated to move in a right or a wrong channel; and unless it is watched, unless it is corrected, it produces some of the worst evils which are known to men—pretense, insincerity, extravagance, and all manner of shams.

Now, there are very many influences at work upon us, tending to give an exaggerated force to this love of praise; and we ought to take heed, for a variety of reasons, lest we be overborne by it, and carried into some of its excesses.

In the first place, it is a national trait. There are race-peculiarities, and there are national peculiarities which are not exactly of the race-type or stamp. Some nations are proud and haughty: some are vain; and we are both—though I think vanity predominates in us. We love praise. We seek it. No person who has been present where there was a distinguished foreigner can have failed to perceive that almost the first questions asked him were, “How are you pleased with the country? How do you like our people?” That breaks out in respect to our nation or to our community, which, if it were to break out in respect to ourselves individually, would seem ridiculous, and would be corrected by the ridicule of society. If one were to go into a company and say, “How do you like me? How do I seem to you? Am I well dressed? Am I handsome? Do you enjoy me?”—he would not be tolerated. Asking about such things would not be permitted. Although everybody knows that the mind of everybody else is filled with such questions, nobody is allowed to ask them. But the strength of our national vanity is such, that we do not perceive how improper the trait is which leads us continually to want to know what is the opinion that is formed of us, and to covet praise, and oftentimes even flattery.

I do not mean to be understood as saying that we alone have this trait. I suspect that in every nation on earth a compliment to the nation would conciliate an audience, and that the attempt to conciliate an audience by that means might be made under almost any circumstances with the certainty that it would be agreeable. But I think there are sturdier people in some countries than in our own. I think there are some countries in which there is more of pride and less of vanity than there is among us.

This national trait, which is in the very atmosphere, as it were, and which belongs to public sentiment, hides from us the reality of the quality in ourselves, and the excess to which we may be carrying it. Our institutions tend to produce it, to educate it, and to reproduce it. For we look to the people for everything. It is the popular judgment that determines laws, magistrates, policies,

all; and we are accustomed to refer everything to the people. In order to obtain favorable judgments from them we have to solicit them. We win them by argument, and we win them also by praise. On the one side and on the other—on the side of those that address, and on the side of those that are addressed—men are perpetually played upon by this love of praise. We defer to other men's opinions.

Men's interests, too, are continually leading them to desire to please. We are all striving after a better condition. We inherit no honors. Every man makes himself. Mainly, men make their own fortunes—and they do it by the hardest. In doing it, there is a large element of conciliation required. Men are obliged to make themselves appear very desirable to their neighbors.

That which already exists in our national constitution, which is a national trait, and which is very much promoted by our political institutions, is also carried forward and educated by our commercial interests. Very few men are sturdy enough to stand alone. We go in flocks. We keep each other in countenance. Unpopular opinions are held by but few. More and more embrace them as they begin to be popular.

When anti-slavery sentiments were unpopular, how very few men avowed those sentiments! What a vast middle class, who hated slavery as much as anybody, but believed in maintaining it, became more and more convinced of the wisdom of emancipation by the changes which gradually took place! And how large was the circuit of the adherents of the anti-slavery doctrine when it became a national feeling, and was crowned with victory and with power! Why, there were none left in the nation that ever had any other opinion than that slavery ought to be abolished! They "always thought so," and "always believed so!"

There are very few persons who are willing to take up a question or cause on its own merits, and stand, if necessary, alone, and quietly, and with simplicity, when all men's notions are beating against them, as waves beat against the rock. It is hard for a man that loves praise to stand alone, and stand against opposition.

The evils that flow from that love of praise which our circumstances tend to cultivate in excess, are manifold. Many of them are well known, but they are not always traced back to their right cause.

Love of praise introduces, in the first place, a false standard of character. It presents to the young who are entering upon the seeking of their fortune, and the establishment of their reputation, a wrong aspect of life. They enter upon it under a mistake, where

their thought is that they must be comely, or seem comely. Where their idea is that to seem well is to succeed, manhood is corrupted in its fountain. The only true ground for those who are aspiring, when they enter life, is *to be*—to be right, to be true, to be manly; and *to seem*—to seem what they are. But where the love of praise is dominant, men come into life rather with the thought as to how they shall gild their manners; as to how they shall make themselves conspicuous; as to how they shall win “golden opinions.” They bait the hook perpetually with falsehoods, and deal perpetually in uncertainties, or in mere gilded shows; and it takes away the vitality of a manly character.

It introduces, also, a false standard of values. Men value not that which is intrinsic, but that which, like money, will buy something. They come to esteem things by their power of procuring praise: not by their power of building up a true manhood; not by that which will make them sturdy; not by that which will make them simple and true; not by that which will make them patient in tribulation; not by that which will give them fortitude under trials: not by those things which go to build them solidly; but by those things which go to garnish and decorate them, and make them appear comely before men.

We see how it is in shops where “fancy prices” prevail. Fancy prices are prices that are unwarrantable. They are prices that are over and above the real utility of things. They are prices which are derived mainly from the fact either that goods have a power of acting upon the fancy or imagination, or that they have that which addresses itself to men’s love of praise. Things that are beautiful, things that will be esteemed as beautiful, things that will be admired, and that will win praise—these are the things to which fancy prices are attached.

That which is true in commerce is just as true in character, in regard to the change of the value of things. That which lies in the mind, as a spring coiled up in a watch, and acts invisibly, imperceptibly, but all the time with an inward sense of what will make us agreeable to people, is a true criterion of measurement. The ideals of life are the measures of value.

Love of praise leads easily to falseness, to boasting, to flattery. For men flatter each other that they may be flattered, and praise each other that they may be praised. It is the rebound of what we do that we are looking for. So there comes in falseness in entertainment; falseness in social life; falseness in friendship.

Do men make sumptuous repasts from hospitality? You are invited as a guest. Is it because you are wanted? Is it to make

you happy that the table is spread royally, and that the gorgeous house opens its portals, and that there is music and gaiety, and every appliance that can tickle the fancy and the palate? Is all this pains taken in order to bestow benefaction on you? O fool! You are of the least value of the whole. You are invited that you may appreciate the master of all this display, and praise him. Much hospitality is a sham and a delusion.

"When thou makest a feast," says the Saviour, "seek not thou great; seek not your friends; seek not those who can make another dinner as big as yours, and ask you in. Do not make commerce, an interchangeable thing, of your hospitality. Do not say, 'You dine me, and I will dine you; you tickle me, and I will tickle you; you praise me, and I will praise you.' When thou makest a feast, if thou wouldst have credit for real hospitality and kindness, go out after the poor in the streets. Bring in those who cannot pay you again."

A cardinal truth is sincerity in hospitality. But where men love praise, how it eats out the heart; and how many that are apparently friends are more friends for what they shall get from you than for anything else! How does adversity test! What a touchstone trouble is! How many when you were on the crest of the wave were friendly to you! But when you went down in the trough of the sea, where were they? Not one could be seen. Much of the friendship of life is kindly, is good-natured; but there is a vast amount of friendliness that is merely a net set to catch your praise. It is friendship for the interest of one alone, and not for the mutual interest of both. Therefore it is said, "Let love be without dissimulation." Do not pretend to love when you do not. Let your friendship be real.

This love of praise in excess, inordinate, vitiates taste. In the early schools of painting, or what are called "the pre-Raphaelite schools" in Italy, and in the early German schools, when men believed, and when painting was merely the language by which they expressed their belief, there was a very stern and literal adhesion to the thing that was thought true. One reason why men have been so fascinated with what are called "the pre-Raphaelite pictures" is that they were painted, not for exhibition, but as a sincere offering to truth. They were genuine; and therefore, however much they were "out of drawing," however far they were from the niceties of a more refined art, there was always an earnestness and a simplicity in them, and they meant what they expressed. This was even more true of the old German than of the Italian schools. There is nothing like the hearty simplicity of the early German painters.

After Raphael, and largely in consequence of his influence, there came a day when there was more beauty and grace, and more correctness of form ; but a large spirit of exhibitoriness crept into the pictures. There is scarcely a Madonna of Raphael that does not look as though it was conscious of being a Madonna ; scarcely a sweet and angelic face that is not apparently aware that it is sweet and angelic ; scarcely a pious countenance that does not seem to know that it is pious. There is an intolerable sense of vanity that has crept into all his pictures. And in this way love of praise has corrupted art. It has caused art to pander to men's vanity, or to worse feelings in men.

That which is true of art is just as true of literature. Men that write under the itch of vanity leave the effects of that vanity on what they write. I have an idea that whatever men do, the feeling which inspires them to do it shows through. I fancy that no man makes a mark, even with a slate-pencil, that something, I do not know what, does not go out from him into that mark. I believe that no carpenter builds a house that something of him does not go into that house.

We know what *style* is in language ; and style goes with everything else. It goes with the builder and painter. It is a personal element which goes with one's work. And where a man is vain, whatever he does carries the marks of his vanity. There never can be strength where one is vain. Strength goes with reality, and sincerity, and earnestness. Power and strength do not belong to a literature which is corrupted by love of praise or vanity.

We see manifestations of this quality in architecture. How few buildings are willing to stand on their uses ! If they are made for commerce, they bear traces of vanity on their face. Have you never noticed, in going through the streets of New York, those flounced and decorated fronts—those vast piles of insignificant architecture, with carvings, and cornices, and all manner of gew-gaws, and tinsels, and trinkets, wrought out of wood or stone ? There are buildings there that would wake you at midnight, saying, "Get up and look at us !" They are evidently built to be seen, and kept to be looked at ; and there is not a simple line nor restful element in the whole of them.

And when men who build such structures come to build our houses for us, what is it that they build ? What is the ideal which they have in their minds ? Is it the sweet contentment of home ? Is it domestic joy, and snugness, and cosiness ? Is it a house that shall be fit for the love and quiet of the family, simple and full of comfort ? All through the land are dwellings which show that

they have been built by architects. This is evident from the yearnings and cravings of vanity which they express. Here stands, on some bleak hill, without a tree or a vine near it, a dwelling-house, with a huge portico and three great staring Greek columns with their capitals, which are of all things the most unsuited to our climate. It is extremely expensive, and ill-adapted for the purposes to which it is devoted; but the owner was going to have a Grecian house, and it was built to gratify his own and the architect's vanity.

And we find all through our dwellings the same vicious out-working of the love of praise. Houses are built, not so much for convenience and comfort, as for the display of skill and the gratification of vanity.

When the architect has done his work, and the house is to be furnished, that same trait is still more apparent. While men are yet poor, so that it is not in their power to be more than comfortable, it is not so observable as when they begin to be wealthy, and can "dash out," as it is called. Then what overloading magnificence we see! Then what cumbrousness! Then what needless and useless expense! Then what crowding! Then what over-doing in every direction, so that the whole house is one exclamation point, inside and outside, standing for admiration! Taste is corrupted; and one of the results of the corruption of taste is that men feel that this sort of taste is the standard. It goes a great way further than violating the canons of taste. It causes the corruption of morals and the corruption of character.

There are hundreds of young men that should be married who are not married. To marry early is discreet and wise. And when men and women are of a marriageable age, I think it to be, in general, true, that it is wholesome for them to be married. It is not necessary that they should remain single because they stand in poverty; for two can live cheaper than one, if they live with discretion, if they live with co-operative zeal, if they live as they ought to live. If the young man is willing to seem poor when he is poor; if the young woman, being poor, is willing to live poorly; if they are willing to plant their lives together like two seeds, and wait for their growth, and look for their abundance by-and-by, when they have fairly earned it, then it is a good thing for them to come early into this partnership. For characters adapt themselves to each other in the early periods of life far more easily than they do afterwards. They who marry early are like vines growing together, and twining round and round each other; whereas, multitudes of those who marry late in life stand side by side like two

iron columns, which, being separated at the beginning, never come any nearer to each other.

Many young men feel that they cannot marry until they can *support a wife*; and by that they mean, until they can support a *house*; yea, until they can live in a house that befits them; until they can make a show; until they can live as their kind of people, the class to which they belong, live—for everybody belongs to a class, a set. When they can do these things they will marry, but not before. And the result is that they are corrupting life in the very fountain.

And when they marry, they make a great mistake if they say, "We will not undertake to keep house; let us board. Then we can have all the comforts of life; we will have all the appearances provided for us; and we shall be relieved from a thousand cares."

There is no school which God ever opened, or permitted to be opened, which young people can so ill afford to avoid as the school of care and responsibility and labor in the household; and a young man and young woman, marrying, no matter from what source they came together, no matter how high their fathers have stood, one of the most wholesome things that they can do, having married for love, and with discretion, is to be willing to begin at the bottom, and bear the burdens of household life so that they shall have its education. I tell you, there are pleasures which many young married people miss. I would not give up the first two years of my married life for all I have now. I live in a big house, with a brown stone front, and very fairly furnished; but, after all, among the choicest experiences of my life were those which I passed through in Indiana, when I hired two chambers up stairs; when all my furniture was given to me, and was second-hand at that; and when the very clothes which I had on my back had been worn by Judge Birney before me. We were not able to hire a servant. We had to serve ourselves. It was a study every day how to get along with our small means—and it was a study never to be forgotten. I owe many of the pleasures which have run through my life to being willing to begin where I had to begin, and to fight poverty with love, and to overcome it, and to learn how to live in service and helpfulness, and in all the thousand ingenuities which love sweetens and makes more and more delightful.

I cannot bear to hear a rich father, whose son has married the daughter of a rich man, but where the riches are not ample enough to set them up, say, "We will keep the young folks at home;" or, "They had better board until they are in better circumstances, so that they can keep house in a respectable way." I would say to such

a young couple, "Go out where buildings are cheap, and take a cottage; or go where you can find apartments that you can afford; and begin in one room, and begin anywhere, almost, rather than not keep house." Do not be ashamed of yourself, young man. If you have married right, you have married one who will be even braver than you are, and will be willing to commence with you, and build from the foundation, truly and genuinely, to the very top.

I look with very great alarm upon the corruption, or perversion, of young people's tastes in this matter. They marry, too often, for love of praise, and sacrifice the happiness of married life to that which is esteemed praiseworthy and fashionable by other people. My advice to every young man or young woman is, Marry for love; love for life; take life at just the point where God's providence has put you; stand there with fidelity and truth; work your way up; and do not go a step farther than you are warranted in going by that which you have earned. Be proud of every step: and when, God having spared your life and prospered you, you become rich and strong, do not be ashamed to go back to the spot from which you started. Do not be ashamed to say, "I began life with no property, and I have worked for all that I have." Be proud to look into the pit from which you have dug your way.

There is another danger springing out of this overweening sense of praise. It gives rise to a corruption to which I have frequently alluded incidentally. I mean the temptation which men are perpetually under, where they live for the love of praise, to go beyond what they are able to sustain, and to resort to all manner of devices in order to maintain appearances. There is a kind of pride that I respect very much; but where I know that persons will all the week long scrimp themselves, and live with the utmost restrictions, that they may have the pleasure of going out on Sunday in a fine dress to make a show, I cannot say that I respect that. Where persons might live with a great deal of comfort if they were content to live in simplicity, but keep up a big establishment, and make themselves absolutely slaves to appearances, so that their very life is wrung out of them by anxieties, I cannot say that I respect that. It is not pride that actuates them; it is vanity.

But it is worse yet where men live beyond their means, and restrict not only themselves but others, because they must make a good appearance in society. That is dishonesty. And where, in order to carry out the behests of this false principle of vanity, they are attempting to maintain a show, and, for the sake of accomplishing this, make use of men, and virtually steal—that is, try to get from men more than they render an equivalent for—they are dis-

honest indeed. Where men beat down the merchant, and beat down the mechanic, and keep themselves in debt to others, and make men serve them on the right hand and on the left, that they may keep up a vain show, they are doing that which is worse than contemptible. It is culpable to the last degree. And manhood is debauched in them.

This is the real meaning of extravagance, as it exists in our collective life in towns and cities, and against which there is so much inveighing. He is not extravagant who lives richly. He is not extravagant who spends what he has abundantly, when he has an abundance to spend. If a man is rich, and he lives in a palace, he is not extravagant. He may be spending money profusely, and yet not spending it extravagantly, if he lives entirely within his means. But any man is living extravagantly who is living beyond that which is prudent; beyond that which he can afford; beyond that which is fit for his position and circumstances and character. It is extravagance in this sense, that it is culpable. It is not extravagant for a man who has abundant possessions to live according to his means; but for other people who have not his means to attempt to live as he does, and to eke out by tricks and shams and pretenses what they lack, is an extravagance; and this is the kind of extravagance which is increasing in our cities.

Not only is the desire for praise corrupted, and not only does it lead to all manner of mischiefs, in these respects, but it tends largely, also, to undermine the sincerity of men's thoughts, of their convictions and of their religious life. It is not to be supposed that one should never pray openly, because Christ says, "When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and shut thy door." This is a general dissuasion from exhibitory religious observances. You have a right to be seen going to church, although display in worship is forbidden. You have a right to be seen relieving the poor; and yet we are commanded not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth. Being charitable that men may see how charitable you are, being devout that men may know it, and seeking reputation by religion or in charitable movements—these things are perverse, corrupt and corrupting. Against all these we are bound to strive.

Do not, then, suffer your conscience to be extinguished by the love of praise. No matter what men may think, no matter what men may require, no matter what the style of society is, no matter what the praises and compliments of men may be, let every man see to it that he has a conscience, bright, clear-eyed, well-instructed. Know what is true, what is right, what is honorable, and what is manly, and stand by them. Guard your conscience against per-

version and corruption by the love of praise. Love simplicity in so far as it means truth.

If God made you half a fool, it is better that you should seem to be half a fool than that you should make believe that you are wise. All sorts of animals are willing to seem what they are. An ass is always willing to be thought an ass; and he honors God in it. An owl is always willing to be thought an owl; and he fulfills the function given to him, even if he does look wiser than he is. And a man should be willing to be just what God made him. Not that he should not desire to increase, to augment, his talents; not that he should not put his money out at interest; but a man who is ignorant had better admit himself to be ignorant. A man who is not a genius had better not think himself to be a genius. A man who is poor had better think he is poor. A man who is unskilled had better admit that he is unskilled. Whatever you are, while you strive for greater excellence, stand on that which is true and right, and do not make yourself out to be more than you are. Do not attempt to put on guises and pretenses, in the vain hope of winning praise.

Will men never learn anything? A man talks to me in such a way that I see through him in a moment. He is trying to make an impression on me about himself, or about this, that, or the other thing; and the moment the door is shut, I say, "What a fool he was to think that I could not see through him!" And yet, I go straight to my neighbor's and try the same trick; and when I am gone, he says, "What a fool!" And he goes to his neighbor, and does the same thing!

We do not learn anything. We do not seem to think that truth makes itself felt. But even though, for a little time, by some device, one may make himself seem other and better than he is, yet in the main men's opinions rest on what is true. Your character in the community is a thing fixed, definitely, and your reputation generally will be what your character is. Men see through your shams. They accommodate you, and call you what they think you want them to; they call you a peacock, or an eagle, or any other bird, as the case may be, to please you; but they laugh as soon as your back is turned; for they know what you are. If you are a jack-daw, they know it. And these weaknesses, these dishonesties, these corrupting pretenses, after all, win but very little. It is false coin that you give, and you get false change, as well as false goods. It is far the best thing for one to attempt to be real, and to be willing to appear at just what he is worth.

Remember one thing more. If it be hard to be sincere and simple,

the degree of hardness is the measure of the necessity for it. It shows how far you are gone. If it is difficult for you, with open face, and quiet eye, and temperate tongue, to stand before men just as you are, how far you must have gone in the wrong direction! You need, more than any other thing, to restate your case to God, and begin at the foundation again.

And let us recollect that while we are playing our tricks and pranks on one another, and living in mountebank shows—in a thousand flatteries and insincerities—there is an Eye that is perfect Truth, and looks through them all. We never can deceive, not for an hour nor for a moment, Him with whom we have to do.

This phantasy of life, this dance of intoxication, this gay revel, will soon be over, and then all the disguises that we are wearing, all the masks that we are putting on, God will tear off, and we shall stand revealed at the last day just as we are. The truth will prevail in the end.

Build, then, for the great day of all—for immortality. Build genuinely, truthfully, lovingly, purely; and then you shall win not only the reality, but that very praise which you have coveted, and sought to buy or bribe with false pretenses. Blessed is he who lives in transparent simplicity here, whose yea is yea, and whose nay is nay—nothing more nor less; and whom God loves because he is true, and brings into his kingdom, where all his children shall be forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WHAT are we, that we should draw near to thee, thou Eternal Power? We cannot lift our thought to the level of thy being. We do not understand thee, nor by searching can any one find out the Almighty unto perfection. We are drawn to thee by our necessities. We are drawn to thee by the need which we have of light, and strength, and comfort. Thy power is not alone in the heaven, but upon all the earth. We are thy creatures. Though we are so far from thee, and so unlike thee; though we are not obedient to thy commands; though we do not fulfill our duties according to the measure of our knowledge and our strength, still we are thine. Erring children are we, but we are children. And we are in our Father's house. And we come with confessions of our unworthiness. And much more, O God, we come to make mention of thy goodness. We come to make mention of thy past mercies. We come to make mention of all that we have known in our homes of the goodness of God, which has attended us at every step, and through every year of our lives thus far. We would acknowledge thy goodness in sparing us, and thy goodness in bounties to us. All that has made life bright and joyful we have owed to thy kind providence. How much we owe thee for these mercies! And how much more do we owe thee for the light of hope; for foresight; for the expectation of immortality; for the vision of our Saviour; for all the gracious promises which are contained in thy Word; for that which we accept by faith of Christ, and which enables us to triumph in life, and over death: and for the glory of a blessed immortality!

O Lord Jesus, make yet more plain to us thy mission, and the mercy that is therein; and give forth to us that divine Spirit by which we may rise to an understanding of thy love, which can never be understood here in its fullness. Bring us, by thy Spirit, into sympathy with thee. Rule in every part of our life. Subdue us to the power of love, that we may cast out every evil desire; that we may resist the things which are offensive to thee; that we may become little children, transformed by thy grace into simplicity, into truthfulness, and into obedience.

Grant, we pray thee, to all in thy presence, the mercies that they need, even if they know them not themselves; if they know that they are troubled, but do not understand the reason of this trouble. Thou, O God, dost understand perfectly; and we pray that thou wilt distribute thy favors, not according to the wisdom of our asking, but according to thine own insight and knowledge of us.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing, to-night, to all those who are under circumstances of trial and affliction. Sanctify to them the dispensations of thy providence.

Bless all those who feel the pressure of care and trouble. May they be able to put their burdens upon the Lord, and cast their care on Him who careth for them. Forbid that thy children should be in bondage as other men are. May they be able to set such an example under trouble, and anxiety, and cares, and afflictions, that men shall see that there is in them and around them more power than those men find among men—even the power of the mighty God.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all those who are troubled; to all those who are tempted; to all those who find themselves ready to slide; to all those who fear; to all those who are in any way caught, entangled, and threatened in life. Wilt thou give them gracious deliverance.

Grant, we pray, if there are those who look on their way among men, and ponder a better life, that they may have the inspiration of thy spirit. Have they not in their thoughts evidence that thou art moving upon

their souls? May they not turn back as from unwelcome things. May those who are conscious of living evil lives, turn their souls, with all their purposes, away from evil, and unto good. Help them! And if they be pursued and caught, and dragged back again into evil, wilt thou rescue them!

We pray, O Lord, that men may learn the new life; and, with mighty outcry, with heart and hand lifted to God, may they find strength to break away from evil, and to cleave to all that is good.

We pray that thou wilt bring to troubled minds, to struggling consciences, to men who are filled with doubts, that settled peace which thy Spirit gives to those to whom the truth comes. Wilt thou bring all inquiring souls to the feet of Jesus; and there may they find peace. Taking his yoke and his burden, may they have rest unto their souls.

O Lord, we pray that thou wilt give us truth. Wilt thou grant that it may be known more and more perfectly throughout our land.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless thy churches of every name. May they be built up in holy faith. And we pray that thou wilt spread intelligence and virtue. May righteousness prevail among thy people. We pray that thou wilt quench lust and passion.

Wilt thou be pleased to help those who are laboring for the reformation of manners. We pray that peace may be vouchsafed to all nations; that selfishness may be checked; and that human feelings may everywhere be felt by men toward men.

Let thy kingdom come, and the whole world see thy salvation.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken, that it may be a caution, that it may throw light upon the paths of those who are erring, and that it may incite to diligence those who need to arouse themselves. Deliver us, we pray thee, from the temptations of vanity. Teach us how to make life benevolent, and not selfish. Grant, we pray thee, that we may be able, in all our relations one to another, in society, and wherever our duties are, to live in simplicity and in truth, fearing God and loving men. Deliver us, we pray thee, from the temptations of the present life—its guiles; its delusions; its false compliances. Deliver us from everything which degrades the soul, and bring us at last, in the love of truth, in the love of God, and in the love of men, into thine own heavenly kingdom, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

THE TEST OF LOVE.

“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”—MATT. vii. 21.

There can be no doubt to those who have followed the line of controversy which ran through the whole of Christ's life—his controversy with the leading religious teachers of his time—that he here throws into contrast the spirit of ethical living and the spirit of emotional living. He is endeavoring to show, in these words, the necessity of character, conduct and life, as a true foundation on which to stand and hope, as distinct from religiousness, whether ceremonial or emotive. All the way through the teaching of the Saviour, this same contrast was eminent; and the apostles had occasion, time and again, to pursue the same line of discrimination, and rebuke men for having neither godliness in life, nor religiousness in feeling, and for so far being totally destitute and deficient. Sometimes—not unfrequently—men were rebuked for being religious in feeling, but not godly in life.

We find the Apostle John, especially in the chapter which we read in the opening service, making the same distinction. He taught that to keep Christ's commandments was the test of being Christ's disciple. The duty of keeping the law of God, action, ethical living, was insisted upon by him.

Among the Jews, scrupulosity in the maintenance of their ritual law was the secret of their church life. They were blinded. When they had been carried away captive, and beaten as with a flail, the more earnest among them endeavored to hold the people together. And in reading the old Scriptures, they interpreted them to say that if the law were kept with absolute perfectness, God would both save them from their enemies, and exalt them to unknown heights of glory. They set about doing it. They undertook to keep the law, understanding by *the law*, the ritual law—the letter of the law. This they kept with extreme scrupulousness,

not only to the very letter, but a little way beyond, in order to allow for shrinkage, or mistake. And it was in this extreme scrupulosity that they placed their hope.

We find all through the teachings of Christ the recognition of this, and his criticism or judgment upon it.

At a later period there grew up many religious people in the midst of the Christian Church who relaxed somewhat their tenacious hold upon external things. There grew up a morbid and artificial spirit of self-sacrifice. And men in some degree thought themselves to be Christians in the proportion in which they violated the natural appetites and the natural affections. Giving a literal rendering to the words of the Master, they did attempt to crucify their minds and their affections. Love itself was put into prison and into disgrace, and men thought they were saints in proportion as they sacrificed the most innocent of affections and relations. They thought they became pure and high in the sight of God in the proportion in which they practised self-repression.

Then sprang up, as a rebound from this, in natures that could not follow it, an intensely practical life; and works and deeds of compassion, without special regard to the nature of the inward states, became signs of safety, and tests of salvableness. Works of righteousness, in one way and another, came to be the grounds and foundations of men's hopes.

Now, all these grounds are partial. The ground of hope consists neither in practical life, nor in an emotive life, nor in the rigor with which one denies himself, nor in the scrupulosity with which one observes known or recognized standards of duty. It consists in the totality which is made up of all these; and we are in a condition of grace or in a condition of safety, not in the proportion in which we have feeling alone; nor in the proportion in which we have practice alone; nor in the proportion in which we perform works of charity alone; but in the proportion in which we combine all the elements of our nature until we have become perfect men in Christ Jesus, so that all emotive experiences, and all determinations, and all intellectual cognitions, and all experiences of joy, are embraced in our Christian experience. Wherever a person takes any one of these elements alone, and carries it to excess, it tends to rebound, by-and-by, to the opposite extreme. And so, in different periods, the Church has been moving from one side to another under the principle of reaction.

There are multitudes in our times who regard the evidences of piety as lying very largely in the nature and strength of their Christian emotions; and there is an equal number, probably, who

mourn because they have no such emotions, because they have no comfortable evidence of their acceptance with God through Jesus Christ. Far be it from me to say that this is not a thing to be desired and sought. Where it is normal, where it is the fruit of the soul brought to a full ethical life, it is both beautiful and desirable. Where it is wholesome and natural, it tends to produce Christian practice, and to make it easier to lead men along the line of practical endeavor.

But, on the other hand, where Christian emotion, or emotion excited under conditions which lead one to suppose it to be Christian emotion, exists alone, and separated from wholesome causations and connections, it tends to supplant right living, and to substitute a kind of intoxicating experience for a manly, practical, wholesome life.

Men seek, often, in revivals of religion, or what may be called *studies* for them, to carry up their feelings to great intensity. They seek faith, joy, rapture, ecstasy. They attempt to kindle in their minds an enthusiasm of moral feeling. They have an impression, when they have carried excitement in this direction to such a degree that it begins to be an intuition, that they are nearer to God; that they are in a more eminent state of piety; that they are in a condition of acceptance which transcends that in which they ordinarily live.

Now, I myself believe that the mind, carried up to its intuitional state, is exalted to a higher plane and is in a higher sphere; I believe that the best action of any faculty is that which is under very high excitement; but I do not think that living in a state of high moral enthusiasm—even that which is intuitional—is necessarily the type of the best piety, in which phrase I comprehend the whole man—body, soul and spirit. I do not regard those who are the most susceptible of these higher forms of feeling, or those who are the most filled with rejoicing, as the best Christians. They *may* be the best, but they are not necessarily so. For emotion, alone, even if it be *moral* emotion, is but a means to an end. At any rate, it is but one among many elements which go to constitute the true Christian life.

There are many reasons why men seek these high feelings. One seems to be this: that they differ from ordinary experiences—that they appear to be special divine evidences of acceptance with God. When men have been living in such a state that they have had no rare emotions; when they have been living so that there has been nothing stimulating nor exhilarating in their experience; and when, under the influence of social excitements,

of religious meetings, of any causes which wake their minds up to a very high state, they go into an experience of vivid, intense, and joyful moral feeling, then they seem to think that is a direct product of the influence of the Divine Spirit upon their souls. I am wont to think that all high feeling is a direct product of the influence of the Divine Spirit upon the human soul; but they think that it is special, personal, and in the nature of a Divine assurance. They think they are sons of God because they have such, to them, rare and strange emotions, and emotions that are so intense.

If a man dream that he lies with the ladder of Jacob before him, and that angels are going up and down; and if he wake in a state of rapture, or of serenity even, he fancies that he has been brought from sin to righteousness, and that there is in that circumstance, somewhere or somehow, evidence that he is a child of God.

These high-feelings appeal, indeed, to the most bewitching part of a man's nature—his imagination. There is no faculty, not excepting reason itself, that has so much to do with the production in us of tenacious impressions, as the imagination; and when reason acts through the affections and the imagination, it works far more powerfully and fruitfully than at any other time. All high feeling tends to mingle itself with the imagination; and a kind of fantasy is the result.

Then, over and above that, there is a love of excitement which is just as likely to prevail in the exercise of the moral feelings as under any other circumstances.

All men love excitement—which is only another way of saying that all men love life; for life is but a state of excitement. We seek it; and when it is sought by physical stimulants we see that it is unwholesome. When it is sought in social things, within due bounds, we believe it to be healthy. It may be sought also in moral feeling; and there it may be wholesome or injurious. A man may be religious to dissipation—if by *religion* you mean a state of being excited in the direction of moral thoughts and moral feelings. There is a dissipation in moral experience which is analogous to dissipation in social life, or even in physical things. And there are many persons who seek the higher forms of religious feeling, because with excitement in joy, and peace, and faith, and all those higher elements, there goes—shall I call it divine intoxication? It is, at all events, a kind of intoxication.

Now, one may seek moral intoxication to his damage. One may so live in the higher range of thought and feeling, and he may so, from day to day, cry out, "Lord! Lord!" that he shall quite forget the service of the Lord—that he shall quite forget the lower

life. One may seek with the disciples to build three tabernacles upon the Mount of Vision, and may dwell there, unwilling to go down to the base of the mountain where humanity is suffering the torments of demoniac possession. It is quite possible for one to be in a spirit of rapture, to have intense faith, to behold the vision of the world to come, to be wrapped in the excitement of song and prayer, and yet to be very selfish, very hard, very proud, very undomestic,—if his sphere of duty lie in the domestic circle,—very careless, and often dishonest—if his duty lie chiefly in his relations to his fellow-men in business. Experience teaches us that one may live in the most excitable moral condition; that he may live in such a state that a hymn shall send him flying through the air, or that a glowing prayer shall make him like a cloud on which the sun shines, and develops all its glories; that he may be in a condition in which he shall weep, and rejoice, and take on the highest forms of experience in the meetings of his brethren, and that yet, inwardly, he may be undrilled in conscience, not disciplined in taste, not active in doing the *work* of the Lord. And he is not the less faulty because his joy happens to lie in the plane of spiritual emotion in distinction from lower and social emotions.

Have you never seen an exceedingly pious person who was exceedingly disagreeable? Have you never found persons who spent hours by themselves, and afterwards made you wish they had spent still more hours by themselves? Have you never held discourses with those who walked with God, and lived as seeing Him who is invisible; who talked of heaven; and who made manifest their profound cognition of spiritual themes; but who were not disposed to yield; who were obstinate; who were not “easy to be entreated;” who were not inclined to humility; who were, rather, self-worshippers; who were not in sympathy with their fellow-men; who, indeed, were quite unconscious that there was such a duty as that of sympathizing with others; who were not radiant in the household; who were like icicles, pure, but very cold; who dispossessed joy itself?

Now, true piety sparkles with joy all over. A true Christian life would make even a little child love to be a Christian. One who has the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ will be as he was; and wherever he came everybody flocked to him. Even the old sturdy priests and Pharisees could not keep away from him. Mothers with their children came to him. Children themselves ran to him. And the wicked—those who were not accounted to be worthy of standing in society free—they thronged his footsteps. Wherever the Master came there were sympathy and attractiveness; and

wherever there is a true piety, it should be sweet; it should be fragrant; it should draw the bees, the very insects—to it.

One may have religion in the form of excitability out of all proportion to his real moral standing. The moral sentiments may be reckoned upon as we reckon upon the sentiment of poetry. As there are certain constitutional elements which go to the production of mathematical capacity, so there are certain constitutional elements which go to the production of moral feelings. A man may pour out from his higher faculties an abundant experience; and yet his life may not be a good life. One may write poetry that shall soar to the seventh heaven; and yet he may be a miserable drunken wretch. We have in our own literature most melancholy instances of that kind. And yet the spirit of poetry, we should suppose, is a spirit of transcendent vision and elevation above the material. A man may be a poet, and sing like an angel, and live like a devil. And precisely in the same way the moral sentiments may be so separated from life that a man may have intense moral feelings, and yet may have no moral conduct; his feeling will be only a substitute for conduct, rather than the cause of it.

Moreover, the fullness and the frequency of higher forms of moral experience depend largely upon the original endowments of the mind—upon the capacity which men have in themselves. Of course, if a man is made with a very large brain, and the several departments of that brain are large and sensitive, the same causation will produce double or treble the result in his case, without reference to any endeavor on his part, that it produces in the cases of many other men. It is no credit to a man who is long-sighted that he sees a great way farther than a man who is short-sighted. His eyes were made to see farther; and it would be absurd for him to arrogate to himself a superior degree of excellence because, having perfect eyes, he can see better than those about him whose eyes are imperfect. But the same mistake is committed in religious experience. Some men feel strongly; but that fact does not indicate anything except that they have strong natures. It is a sign, not of attainment, but of original capacity. *And of him to whom much is given, much shall be required.*

There are very many men who weep easily; who rejoice naturally; who fly up into enthusiasm at the first touch; and who are supposed to be pre-eminently Christian above those who are relatively stupid, or torpid. Their endowment may be more fortunate, but so far as its being a test of piety is concerned it is of no value.

I suppose there is more virtue in many men who simply maintain decency in life than there is in other men who maintain pre-

eminent beauty in life. If you judge by the amount of effort that one must put forth, there are many men that live low moral lives who are deserving of more credit than many men who live high moral lives.

Here is a man who has been living all his life long just on the edge of swearing. Oaths have been perpetually hissing in him like steam repressed in a boiler; and he has kept them under. There is a man who never thought of an oath. And I think, as God measures, that there is more credit due the man who did not swear when he wanted to all the time, and held in with pain and watching and self-exertion, than to the man who did not swear only because he did not want to. The former man has expended more power to maintain an average decency than many men who stand far above him do to maintain their higher estates. I do not say that he is as good a specimen of manhood as they are; I am now speaking of the quality of merit, of the kind of measure, which is involved, and which depends upon us, and not upon what we have received—not upon our original endowment.

Many men have great cheer and great hope who are seeking daily, with more or less success, but with honest earnestness, to do God's will; and yet it may not be such as to show itself in the form of a distinct emotive experience.

What, then, is the product of these thoughts and these discriminations?

In the first place, no man is to suppose that he is not a Christian because he is not a subject of pre-eminent experiences. It may be a very desirable thing for you to have them; but even if you have them not, you still may be a Christian. He who does the will of God, or seeks to do it; he who keeps the commandments of Christ; he who fulfills the Scripture saying, "And hereby we do know that we love him, if we keep his commandments"—he is the Christian.

Well, what are the commandments of Christ? Who can doubt what they are that will take the four Gospels, not as they are glossed and interpreted by the mazes of theology, but in their simplicity? Let one take the four Gospels and read what was the life of Christ, and what his example was, and it will be found that the divine commandments are all summed up in a single element—a truly benevolent disposition; a heart that loves God and men, and brings a man into sympathy with his fellows.

If you undertake considerably, genuinely, earnestly, to live according to the commands of Christ Jesus, though you never have an emotion that rises to the form of a flame, though you

never have an experience that shoots itself up radiantly, though you never thought that you saw a vision nor dreamed a dream, your steadfast living on the lower plane where you are endeavoring to carry out the spirit of true beneficence, is evidence that you are a child of God. They who keep the commandments of God are his children.

We hear much said about the love of Christ; we read much about it in hymns; and it is beautiful. We read much about it in the biographies of holy men, to whom it gave great delight. We read much about it in the history of the disciples of Jesus. And it is made a test everywhere. "You must love Christ," people are told. The reply is, "I cannot love him; I am never conscious of loving him." And here comes in this very precious passage: "We know that we love him if we keep his commandments." It is not necessary to the loving of Christ that there should be a vision of him—a portraiture of him. It is not necessary that you should, in some happy moment, see him, and have a lover's rapture and enthusiasm in his presence, and pour out your heart consciously toward that Being who has been revealed to you. I do not say that there is no such experience as that, and that it is not a higher experience, and that it is not one to be desired; but I say this, that it is not necessary. A man may be so literal as never to have had an imagination of the Saviour in his life; and yet he may be a disciple, he may be living obediently, and he may have a hope of salvation assured to him. For, if we keep Christ's commands, we give evidence that we love him. In other words, there is a practical as well as an emotive way of loving. Those who love Christ with an understanding of the proportions of spiritual life, are on a higher plane than those who have not such understanding; but they are not the only ones that love. Some love by conduct, and they confederate their faculties in a supremacy of divine benevolence. They place great stress on daily ethical experience. If men have an emotive experience, they are fortunate indeed. They are the poets. They are the prophets. They are the priests. They are the elect. They are the higher order of men. God orders it as it pleaseth him in that regard. I do not undervalue this experience; I would put it very high in my estimate; but I would say to the poor man and woman who stand on the lowest plane; who are literal; who are unimaginative; who are practical; who have very little upspring; who lack the emotive element; who wish they could sing and glow, but cannot; who wish they could see a picture of the Lord in the air, but cannot; who wish they could have love to a Person, as others have, but

never have it—I would say to them, If you obey Christ's commands, he says, "Hereby I know that you love me, and I accept your love in that you keep my commandments. If your practical life is according to the spirit of true benevolence; if you accept the command, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' and you try to love God; 'and thy neighbor as thyself,' and you try to love your neighbor as yourself; if you take the commandments as they are given in the Word of God, and attempt, day by day, to live according to those commandments, that practical endeavor I accept as love to me."

And why not? Is not that the very thing that we are doing every day in our intercourse with each other? Are the most tender relations always those in which there is the most declarative affection—the most demonstrative love? There are some households where the mother is one of those phlogistic natures that we meet with, and wants forever to be caressing and kissing her children, and talks much of sentiment. She does feel a great deal of love for her children; but, after all, their shoes run down at the heel, and their stockings are not always mended, and the table is slatternly set, and things go at loose ends about the house, and the husband is not very happy; but she makes up for what she lacks in practical matters, by excess of feeling. It is all feeling and no practice, with her. But is there not to be something besides feeling in domestic life?

On the other hand, there are multitudes of mothers who almost never kiss their children; who very seldom indulge in the rapture of feeling; who have not much feeling anyhow. But where has the feeling of these emotionless mothers gone to? I have seen brooks that had nothing to do, and that flowed all day and all night full of water. I have seen other brooks that, though they seemed to have the same sources of supply, every day as they flowed down, grew shallower and shallower. Where was the water? I found that it went into the race on one side of the channel, and down into the mill, where it was set to *work*; and I found that far below it came back into the channel again.

I look at many people, and I see that their emotions do not turn wheels. I know others who do not seem to have much feeling, but in whom all the practical elements of life suck up that thought and that feeling which exist in them in the form of a latent force. They are absorbed in the affairs of daily life. And so it comes to pass that frequently the best household is not that where they have the most hallelujah, but that where they have the most order and system and kindness, and all that which is developed in the lower forms of what is good.

Is not that love, then, which pervades the domestic economy, and orders aright, and has foresight?

"But, after all," you may say, "is not emotive life better than mere practical life? Suppose you had both?" It would be all the better. But it is not everybody who has steam enough to work the engine and blow the whistle all the time. We must take men just as they are made.

Some men generate too much feeling, and some do not generate enough; so you must understand and take every man according to his disposition.

We hear Christ saying: "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Yes, there is sometimes a love that never speaks. There is a love which hides itself, and never wishes to have its work known. There is a love that simply diffuses itself in creation, in organization, in varied industry. It permeates life. It is like the sunlight, that goes down into the ground, and is lost, but comes up again, as violets, as daisies, as tulips, as all manner of flowers. There is a quality of the soul that pours the light of love down into the practical aspects of life, and comes up in the forms of joy, and of gladness, and of purity, and of truth, and of justice, and of the fulfillment of all known duty. And it is a great comfort to me to hear Christ saying: "You may know that you are mine, if you only try, with all your heart, to keep my commandments. This practical obedience I accept as love." Oh! what a release it is from bondage! Oh! how many persons, comprehending it, say, "I am comforted!"

When I was young, and longing for the truth, I thought I must have the same experiences that other eminent Christians had. I read of the raptures that old Dr. Payson used to have, and thought I must have the same. I tried to follow other men's glowing experiences. And so it was with my acquaintance Montgomery, who, before his conversion, was a bad boy with a great many good spots. He said to a good old Methodist Elder who was laboring faithfully to show him the way, and who recounted to him his own stirring and rapturous emotions of love, and joy in the Holy Ghost: "Now, take me up there where you were. Where did you kneel down? Put my knees just where yours were. Where did you look? I look there too, but I do not see anything." Nothing came to him, and he went away as unsatisfied as he came. Many persons read what saints have seen and felt, and have gone and put their knees where the saints knelt, and have uttered the same prayers that they uttered, and waited for the same results; but those results have not come, and they have said, "It is because I am depraved."

Do not you know that this is so? Are there none here who have done that same thing—as I did? In old Amherst College is a room that I used to occupy. I never go there that I do not stop and look in at the door and window of that room. In the first year of my Amherst experience, if ever there was a thirsty ground that longed for rain, my soul longed for it. If ever there was a yearning, an imploration, which words could not measure nor express, I had it. I longed for the evidence that I was a Christian. I longed for the evidence that I was a child of God. With every single feeling flush; with my soul mounted on wings of plumage bright as that of autumn birds, ready for far flyings, all that I needed was the slightest instruction. But the instruction did not come; and so I was reading and reading and reading, and throwing myself on my knees, nightly, and praying, literally by the hour, “Lord, come down! Lord, change this heart of mine! Lord, give me to see thee! Lord, reveal Christ to me!” and nothing came—*nothing*; no more than if I had been a pilgrim going to Mecca; no more than if I had been a Fakir in India. And I am sorry, from the depth of my heart, for those who are reading the transcendent, inflammatory experiences of men who were ordained of God to live in a higher moral sphere, and who think that everybody, that all sorts of folks, though they be down at the bottom of the ladder, must mount upon the same experiences before they can be children of God. Oh, poor creatures! it is not necessary that you should see Christ, or that you should fashion an image of him before which your heart shall spring up and sing and glow. Hear Christ saying to you, “Come and be my scholars, and let me teach you. Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you”—what? Ecstasy? No; “rest. Come and trust me.”

Love will break out in some natures in the form of emotion; but if it is not strong enough in your nature to develop itself as a separate emotion, then let it manifest itself in the form of an inspiration of daily life. Live aright. Live lives of genuine benevolence; live lives of purity; live true lives; and Christ will accept those lives as evidence of love to him.

When I go away and leave my little garden-spot in the country to my faithful friend and superintendent there, and return in the autumn to see that, without a word from me, he has known my taste; that he has planted the flowers that he knows I love; that he has cared for those parts of the ground which he knows I am most particular about; that he has planted the vegetables of which I am the most fond; that he has managed the place as he thinks I

am best pleased to have it managed, I take that summer's work as evidence of his regard for me, though he has not one word of enthusiasm for me when I meet him, but only a shake of the hand, and, "How do you do? I am glad to see you back again;" though he never puts his arms about me, nor seems overjoyed at seeing me. As I go over the ground, and see the pains that he has taken, I say, "He thought of me. This is for me. And this is for me. His whole summer's work proves that he has had me in his mind."

Now, where Christ finds that a man's life has been shaped in obedience to his commandments; where he finds that his nature has been made deeper and larger and richer; where he finds that selfishness and pride and vanity and envy and all manner of evil dispositions have been cast out from him; where he finds that he has changed his dislikes and likes so that they shall be in conformity to the divine will—where Christ finds that these things have taken place in a man for his sake, he accepts that man's life as a token of love to him.

On the other hand, there is profit to be derived from that general view in this: That those who are walking in the places of Christian experience should take heed. For it is quite possible for a man to besiege the very walls of heaven with his rapture, and yet receive the answer, "Depart: I never knew you." "Lord! Lord!" may be rapturously spoken; but how you have treated your fellow-men, how you have lived where your duties were, what you have done with the obscure parts of your life, and what you have wrought by your dispositions—all these questions are to come up in review in the last day. It is not enough that you know how to be cheerful and rapturous. It is not enough that you take fire easily at meetings among your brethren. It is not enough that you love hymns and prayers. It is not enough that the society of those who love these things inflames and kindles you. Take heed that you do not make your religious experiences a substitute for ethical life. See that those experiences make you more faithful, more honest, more gentle, and more self-denying for the sake of others. By a reaction of your higher experiences enrich your life. While higher experiences become great joys to those who have them, let them also become nutriment to their own and other souls.

Not every man, then, that says, "Lord, in thy name have we taught, and in thy name cast out devils," but those who can draw near and say, "Lord, behold me and those whom thou hast given me;" those who can bring with them their companions and others over whom they have wept, for whom they have labored, in whom they have lived, and upon whom they have planted; those who can

show that they have been to their fellow-men what Christ was to them and is to all, giving himself as a perpetual sacrifice, that men in his life might find their own lives; those who can present themselves before God with a record of right conduct, as well as of holy dispositions and noble experiences—they shall be received by him; and over their heads shall be heard, with rejoicing, the declaration, “Well done, good and faithful servants.”

Begin well at the very bottom; carry up fidelity through every part of your life; and if it be given to you, besides this, to mount as the flames do, and glow with the higher forms of Christian experience, be thankful for them likewise; but do not take one as a substitute for the other. Grow up into a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, that thou dost not despise our weakness, and that thou dost not look upon our infirmities and our transgressions with indignation in over-measure. Thou art a Father full of compassion. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust. We rejoice in this compassionateness of thy nature; for thou hast not put us far off from thee: the length of the road is of thine ordaining. We have what thou hast given us; and thou hast taught us to use it so that our talents shall be multiplied, and our strength increased, and our knowledge augmented, and our virtues carried forward toward perfection. But the way is long, and the task is difficult, and the temptations are often very great. We rejoice that thou art not exacting nor stern. We rejoice that thou dost not hold us, except as a father holds his children, to the tasks of duty. We rejoice that thou art full of sympathy and leniency, and art wont to overlook, making haste to forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin. And we rejoice, not only that thou dost forgive, but that thou dost still hold us up to the standard of duty; that thou wilt not suffer us to fall into indifference; that thou wilt not permit us to go on in ways of evil; that thou dost love us patiently enough and continuously enough to press us upward and onward toward that manhood which is in Christ Jesus. We thank thee for thy fidelity. We thank thee for thy punishments. We thank thee for all those piercings and woundings by which thou dost manifest thyself to be a Father, chastening whom thou dost love, lest they fall off and become recreant, and unworthy of thy paternity. We ask thy forgiveness for all the sins which thou hast beheld in us in days gone by. We ask thy forgiveness for all those states of selfishness, of pride, of envy, and of worldliness in its offensive sense, which thou dost behold in us. We pray that thou wilt help us from day to day to root out from ourselves those causes of transgression which exist there. We pray that thou wilt strengthen us to every virtuous purpose; that thou wilt increase in us every aspiration for that which is good; and that thou wilt give us unwearied pursuit after all those things which are high and noble. And may we not be discouraged, nor turned back, nor be weary in well-doing.

Grant thy blessing to rest on each one as thou seest that he needs. Wilt thou comfort those that mourn, wilt thou lift up those who are in bereavement, that they may have a sanctified sorrow, that they may be filled with hope, and that they may taste the secret sweetness of joy in their souls?

We pray that thou wilt let the light of the resurrection morn shine upon those who have sent forward their children and dear friends to the home beyond. May they see them in the light of the coming glory, being themselves expectant heirs of immortality.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those who are in discouragements, and whose strength seems overmatched by their circumstances. Grant unto them the inspiration of hope. May they live by hope. May hope be in them a bounty, working all courage, and patience, and fidelity.

We pray that all may feel that it is the hand of God that permits whatever trials come upon them. May they feel that thy providence is over all thy work. Let them remember that not a sparrow can fall to the ground unnoticed and unpermitted, and that the least things which concern our happiness and welfare, here and hereafter, are before thine eye. May we all, as children, be patient with the dealing of the Lord.

We pray that thou wilt grant strength to those who are under the burdens of life, and in its perplexities, and are in doubt as to the way of duty,

and often find duty burdensome. As their day is, so may their strength be also.

We pray that every one may glory in the Lord, and not in his own power, nor wisdom, nor skill, nor riches. We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant unto all thy people who hunger and thirst after righteousness the fulfillment of thy gracious promises. May they discern what those things are in which they are most deficient. May they long for those things most which shall tend most to the perfectness of their nature here. May all thy people stand to thee in relations of love; and from thee may they interpret thy commands, thy dispensations, and thy providences, and their own duties. And we beseech of thee that they may be able to search themselves in the light of a new benevolence, and see where they stand, and what are their joys and sorrows. So may they have the interpretation in themselves, from out of thy law, which is thine own self.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon parents who are in the midst of their duties and offices of rearing children. Grant them the wisdom of patience. May they have joy in their children. And if there be any that are in sorrow and trouble on account of their children, may they feel that God is their Counselor, and Stay, and Strength. If there are any who are wandering for the moment from the fold, bring them back, we beseech of thee, to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls.

We pray that thou wilt be with those whose thoughts go out in love to wherever their beloved are, upon the sea, in the wilderness, or in distant lands. Wherever our children, or companions, or friends may be, as our thoughts to-day go out to meet them, may thy thoughts accompany ours, and may thy blessings abound with these dear ones.

We rejoice, O Lord, that we can commit everything which is precious to us to thy hands, believing that thou lovest us more than we love ourselves, and that whatever is dear to us is more dear to thee than it can be to us. Unto thee as a Tower of refuge may we run. Wilt thou be to us a Pavilion, where we may hide ourselves when storms are out and darkness comes. Grant that we may be able, every day, more and more to bring ourselves and all that interests us into the presence of our God, and there find rest under the shadow of his wings.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon those who go forth to labor among the poor, the sick, and the ignorant, to relieve and instruct them, and to lead them into the ways of virtue and truth. May they be strong in this work of the Lord. And may they reap while they sow. May they take their joy as they go along. May they think it reward enough to be workers with God.

Be with our Sunday-schools and Bible classes, all of them, as they are gathered together. And grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who go forth to visit jails, and prisons, and houses of refuge. Grant, we pray thee, that they may carry the spirit, and not the letter, of Christ with them. And may they have abundant fruit of their fidelity.

We pray for the churches in this city, and for the churches in the great city adjoining, and for all the churches throughout the length and breadth of this land. We pray that they may more and more seek after the things which make for purity, and truth, and concord. And may that spirit of love which brought Christ from above pervade all his churches. May the power of a true benevolence be felt in them. And may they promote justice, intelligence, and all forms of civilization.

Let our nation rise up before thee in the symmetry of strength and in the beauty of virtue. Hear our cry for the nations that are despised, that are cast down, and that sit in darkness. Roll away, we beseech of thee, the night which oppresses them. Bring in the daylight of knowledge, so that

superstition, and despotism, and all that wickedness by which men are able to hold their fellow-men in subjection may be done away. And grant, we pray thee, that at last the fulfilment of thy promises may come, and the whole earth see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore.
Amen.



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word of instruction. May it comfort, and may it warn. May we be delivered from dependence upon our emotions and feelings. May we rather look for the whole of our lives—for what we are and what we propose to be—to the working out of our daily life in the sphere where thy providence calls us, and where our duties are. We pray for help. We pray for divine pity, and succor, and strength, while living; and in dying; and in living again. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit.
Amen.

SAVED BY HOPE.

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."—**ROM. vii. 9—25.**

The question arises, whether Paul was speaking of his own experience, or whether he was giving the type of a universal experience through which all men have to pass. Unquestionably he was giving his own experience in part; and just as unquestionably it is an experience which is in its full extent impossible to the great majority of men. The facts which underlie this experience are common to all—namely, the facts of universal imperfection, and universal aspiration, accompanied with a sense of disappointment and painfulness; though only in natures of a high moral grade does this experience work out any such positive form, and come to such results as are here delineated in such remarkably strong language. It reveals the utter disappointment and the wretched discontentment of men who are endeavoring to live aright, and yet who, the more they examine themselves, are better satisfied of their moral imperfections.

After this sad descant, that closing verse of the chapter sounds very strangely. The apostle goes on in that mournful vein, saying substantially this: "I have two men in me; I have an animal man, and a spiritual man; and the spirit man is trying to emerge out of the animal condition, out of the body, out of the flesh, and go up on a higher plane; and the flesh is all the time too strong for it, and pulling it back, and throwing it down." So, at last, in this long conflict, I have come to that state in which I set one off against the other, and say, "My real self, my upper self, admires God's law and all that is noble, which it develops, and aspires toward it, and longs for it; but that under self, which sprang from the ground, and which is tending backward all the time, is pulling down this upper self, and bruising it, and maiming it, and hurting it in every way. I am always seeing what I ought to be, and am always trying to be that; but yet I do not hit the mark. I am always in a state of aspiring with one part of my nature, and of being degraded by the rest.

It is like the struggle of a man on a march, chained to a dead body, who has to carry himself and drag the body too, and says, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Or, it might be said, "Who shall deliver me from this death, which comes to me by reason of my body?"

And right in the midst of that most profound expression of moral sadness, that self-measuring experience, which results in his stamping his life with condemnation at every step, sounds out, like one single trumpet-note of victory: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He does not say what he thanks him for; he does not say how he stands related to it; but just before he cried, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and now he exclaims, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

In one of the East Indian campaigns, during the great insurrection, when the English army were shut up in a city, besieged, almost at the point of death from starvation, and decimated by the constant assaults of the adversary, a Scotch lassie, who belonged to a Highland regiment, all at once thought she heard the sound of bagpipes afar off; and the soldiers laughed her to scorn. But after a little time others heard it. And then there came in note after note. By-and-by the sounds of the instruments of a full military band were recognized. And soon, from out of the forest, came the relief army, that broke up the siege and gave them deliverance. And with flying colors, and glorious music, they came marching up to the now released city.

Such is the difference between the last verse of the seventh chapter, and the last verse of the eighth chapter, of Romans. For here, in the seventh, is that first, far-off note of victory. After that descant of his own wretchedness, and poverty, and moral imbecility, comes the exclamation: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then, in the eighth chapter, he breaks into a discussion of the spirit-life and the redemption of the flesh, and there are snatches, again and again, of that victorious note, growing stronger and fuller, till he comes clear down to the end, when he breaks out: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord." And there comes in the army. There are the banners. There is the full band.

I do not know whether I shall be able to succeed in giving you this line of thought, as it developed itself then, and in the more modern form, as it naturally develops itself among us to-day; for there are two translations which have to be given of many parts of the Word of God. We have to translate passages from one language into another; and then we have to translate much of the truth of God's Word into the modern style of thought.

This doctrine was oriental. It was a doctrine delivered according to oriental modes of thinking, which have changed. After eighteen hundred or two thousand years of growth, our method of taking hold of things, our mode of looking at them, is so different that there is the necessity of translation from one method or mode to another, as well as from one language into another.

When one is born into this world, he is born into a school of laws. Unless you have thought of it, it will surprise you to see how, at every single step, and on every single side, men touch law. It will surprise you to see how many spheres there are opened to them. Just as soon as the child is born, and begins to develop in consciousness and in the rudimentary forms of choice, he has to begin to learn physical law. First, he learns it as respects himself. He learns it as it relates to the eye, the ear, the hand, the body. He learns his relation to external physical law by fire, by water, by cutting edges, by stairs down which he falls, by all manner of ma-

terial elements. And he generally gets knowledge by little tentative ways; by endeavors that are more or less punitive. The first step into life is a step of learning physical laws. Of course the child cannot comprehend the scheme of law which belongs to the whole universe. He takes in only that part of it which touches his own being. This knowledge does not flash upon the child instantly, but comes to him gradually. He will touch the fire, and will be burned. and will cry; and he will touch it again; and it is not until the repetition has suggested the connection which there is between the glowing coal and the sense of pain, that he learns not to touch it. And even then he does not think of law, or anything of that kind. The condition of possessing knowledge in this world is that one shall first learn physical laws—one, two, three, many scores of them; and that it shall be a gradual unfolding; and that much of it shall be the result of mistakes, or of ignorances, and the punitive consequences which follow them.

Just as quick as the child gets old enough to be at all intelligent, he finds that he enters upon thought, and expansion therein; but he is not set free. He is kept upon the same process of acquiring knowledge of law. There is continued the same necessity of his knowing physical law; but he comes also into the relation of affection to his parents, and brothers and sisters, and others, members of his household. He learns that there are other than mere physical laws of which he must have a knowledge. He learns that his life is developing into a broader sphere. He learns that he is under the dominion of laws which govern the living of one with another. He begins to learn the domestic and social elements of law.

He no sooner goes out of the household than he finds that there is a society law, to which he is amenable, and that there are two forms of this law. One form is that which is expressed by public sentiment, manners and customs. It involves the question of what it is right to do on certain occasions. It inquires, for instance, how one shall go into the presence of others; how he shall go out from their presence; what is respectful and kindly; what is courteous. There are a thousand elements of unwritten law which relate to intercourse outside of the household, between the old and the young; between the eminent and the inferior. And one has to learn these. Until he has learned them, he is not accounted as well-bred. He learns them gradually, a little at first, and then a little more, and so on from beginning to end. And he is breaking and breaking these unwritten laws continually, in order that he may learn. He is always seeing which is the right way, and not walking in it. He knows what perfection is, but he is conscious of being imperfect.

And when, still further, he goes into the school, he learns there the same thing. The schoolmaster is only an applier and interpreter of laws, unfolding him through the process of knowledge.

If he learns a trade, he has to go through the same process. And if he goes into a profession, it does not relieve him from this test. There is no sphere in which he is relieved from it, all the way up to what is called his majority—from the beginning until he becomes a man, and enters upon an active life. And then the sphere opens yet further to him—not only the mundane sphere, but, if he be well taught, a higher one, in which he has a conception of a common-wealth of faculties in himself—what we call character, or manhood—something that he has to attain to, by using the appliances which God in his providence has given him. This conception of character, together with the attempt to obey all this complexity of intersphering laws, has the result of leading him to measure himself; and directly he will have the experience of aspiration, and the consciousness of coming short, of imperfection, of sinning, of failing.

Now, it was not an accident, I think, that the world was made as it was. I am one of those who believe that God did what he meant to do when he made this world so that everybody should come into it a pulp, knowing nothing, and attaining to every thing he has by gradual unfolding. I believe he intended it. I believe that was the divine idea. You do not need to go to anything but to life to find it out. There is God's revelation. He meant that the race should be created in such a way as that it should come to knowledge by these consecutive steps into higher spheres, all the way through learning law along the line of right development, and gradually attaining to obedience. So that the whole race has, in each generation, begun at the very lowest point—at zero—working up the scale by these tentative processes. There is a voice of God in actual human life teaching us that these are the facts. I shall not undertake to confute the theologies which have had their schemes on this matter. I shall simply state what every child now may know: that this is the divine method, and is the one which is interpreted by the actual occurrences of life.

If there be anything that we can learn from nature, it is that men, being born into this world, unfold gradually through an increasing knowledge of laws, and learn to obey those laws, little by little, because that was the way in which God thought it best they should be evolved and developed.

When, therefore, we say that all men are sinful, we speak in the line of the world's experience. When we say that men are sinful in every faculty, and that there is not a single faculty in the

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Now, it was not an accident, I think, that the world was made as it was. I am one of those who believe that God did what he meant to do when he made this world so that everybody should come into it a pulp, knowing nothing, and attaining to every thing he has by gradual unfolding. I believe he intended it. I believe that was the divine idea. You do not need to go to anything but to life to find it out. There is God's revelation. He meant that the race should be created in such a way as that it should come to knowledge by these consecutive steps into higher spheres, all the way through learning law along the line of right development, and gradually attaining to obedience. So that the whole race has, in each generation, begun at the very lowest point—at zero—working up the scale by these tentative processes. There is a voice of God in actual human life teaching us that these are the facts. I shall not undertake to confute the theologies which have had their schemes on this matter. I shall simply state what every child now may know: that this is the divine method, and is the one which is interpreted by the actual occurrences of life.

If there be anything that we can learn from nature, it is that men, being born into this world, unfold gradually through an increasing knowledge of laws, and learn to obey those laws, little by little, because that was the way in which God thought it best they should be evolved and developed.

When, therefore, we say that all men are sinful, we speak in the line of the world's experience. When we say that men are sinful in every faculty, and that there is not a single faculty in the

human soul which does not come to its knowledge by the steps of learning, we speak in accordance with the facts of life. If you look along the line of any faculty to the law which belongs to it, you will find that there has never been an intelligent being in the world who kept that law, or could keep it, or was expected to keep it. There has never been a human being created who, if you should take one of his faculties and lay its law alongside of it, would not be found to have broken it inevitably—to have broken it by the organic necessity of his creation. It could not be otherwise. Can a man see before he learns to see? Can a man walk before he learns to walk? Are men to blame because the moment they are born they do not run? Is a man to blame for acting according to the necessity of the creative idea—universal imperfection? *

In this sense, every part of a man, body and soul, begins at the bottom, where it has to learn everything, and has to learn it by mistakes as well as by knowledges, in accordance with the fact of universal imperfection; and if you call the violation of law *Sin*, then there is universal sinfulness. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now." The whole world has been growing through the stages of this necessity—by this attempting to learn law, and running against it, and receiving its back-thwack.

It is the world's universal sentiment, looking at it in its secular aspect, not only that there is no man who has obeyed, but that there is no man who can obey perfectly. Ignorance itself is enough; but then consider the surrounding influences in society which meet generations. Before the child knows anything; before it can control by intelligence its conditions, he is met by good persons or by bad persons, as the case may be. The best of persons are imperfect. There is no father, there is no mother, that does not impress some influences upon the child that are wrong—that is, that lead him to violate the great abstract laws of his being. Myriads of children are born under influences that are concentrated upon them, and that are wrong all the time, and that bend them and bias them.

Consider what forces act upon men from national life, from the avocations in which men engage, from all the influences which come upon men from the natural world, which they have no voice in producing, and which they do not understand how to meet. Consider what must be the life of an Esquimaux, buried for so many months of the year underground, and living in his squalid hut. Compare his life with the life of a Greek, in his beautiful climate, and with all the delightful scenery with which he is surrounded. Consider how differently they are situated. Consider what influences are brought to bear upon the little beginner in life when he starts. Consider how

many of these influences are prejudicial; how many are limited; how many are imperfect; how many are adverse. And next consider what would be the result of a clear view of an ideal manhood, harmoniously developed within, and perfectly obedient to law without. If you should bring such an ideal as that rigorously to bear upon any household or school or nation; if you should hold up the full, final aspect of a civilized and well developed man as the law of personal conduct, and bring it clearly and sharply to every man's consciousness, there would not be a man on the face of the globe who would not feel, "I am dead, if that is life." As long as men have no conception of a true manhood; as long as this is not brought home to them, they can say, with Paul, "I was alive when I did not know the law. As long as I had not a measure by which I saw what was manhood, I was unconcerned, though I was devoid of it, and deficient in every one of its elements. And when the measure came I saw how lacking I was." Yet, such is the condition of universal being that men do sin, and must sin. That is to say, by the very nature of their being they are imperfect. And this being the fact, there is infixed in every part of man's nature a provision for his imperfection.

The mother—what is she, carrying her babe in her arms and thinking for it, and feeling for it, and shielding it, but a divine providence which recognizes its helplessness, and administers to its wants with a care without which it would perish on the very threshold of its ignorance and weakness? For a child is organized in imbecility. But its future is before it. There is nothing of it but the possibility of the future.

When the child leaps from the mother's arms into the household, is it held to a rigorous account for all its little ignorances, for all its unskillfulness, and for all its mistakes? Just so much discipline is employed as is necessary to secure the child's own good, and harmony in the little community round about it; but no more. Allowance is made for the child's want of development. It must creep before it can walk; and this fact is moral as well as physical. Every household is a little community based on two facts—first, the imperfection of its members; and secondly, the taking them in their imperfection, and treating them, not as culprits, not as in a damnable condition, but as in a condition of imperfection which is a creative fact, necessary and unavoidable. There could not be a household system that should undertake to measure the conduct of children by the line and plummet of justice. There has never a child lived that knew how to carry its body so that it should not every day break laws; and if you were

rigorous with the child's disobedience, you would exterminate him, so that there would not be skin enough left on him to whip. There is not a child born that does not violate the law of the eye, and the law of the hand, and every law of the body, in his intercourse with his brothers and sisters and companions. There is not a child that lives who is not led by his temper to interfere with the comfort and happiness of those with whom he associates. When children come to be five, six, seven, eight years old, they leave a trail of imperfections along the path where they walk; and if you were to apply to their conduct rigorously the law of right and wrong, and they were to be punished in everything according to the measure of their violation of rectitude, there would not be a child to punish, in ten minutes. It would annihilate their existence. And therefore the principle of tolerating violation of law is inherent in the very nature of the existence of the household.

When you go out of the household and come into the school, is not the condition on which the teacher assumes the direction of the scholars this: that he shall give himself to bearing with dullards, and roguish boys, and mischievous girls? And is he not obliged to tolerate evils every single day? Is not the government of the school built up on the foundation of tolerating wrong—not because it is wrong; not on account of any love for that which is wrong; but because wrong is inherent in the conditions on which human life is based? Human nature is imperfect in the beginning; it continues to be imperfect; and you are obliged, if you are going to make anything of it, to bear with it.

And when you go out of schools into trades, what would you think of a master-workman who should pitch a boy out of the door or window, because, as soon as he had received his first hint, he did not know how to use the tools, and work up the materials to the best advantage? What the apprentice went into the shop for was to make mistakes, and to learn by making them. It is by making mistakes in learning a trade that he comes to understand the nature and use of the natural laws which lie in those departments in which he is engaged. And learning implies that there is somebody who will teach, and will wait, without impatience, until instruction has had time to produce its proper results.

If you go further than that—into society—you will find that all its departments are obliged to adapt themselves to these two great facts: first, that there is universal imperfection, or sinfulness—if you choose to call it by that name; and, secondly, that there is no getting on except by a kindly, nourishing, benevolent toleration of this imperfection, until persons have had time to grow out of it.

If you could at once open the whole conception of character, the complete ideal of manhood, upon the reflective, imaginative, conscientious nature that stands at twenty-five or thirty years of age, and therefore has knowledge enough to take in the full conception of what is expected of him in body, in soul, in mind, in affection; if you could show him this whole realm of law in its intricacy, touching him at every pore, pressing upon every part of himself, night and day, in the family, in the shop, in the street, as a citizen, and more especially as an heir-expectant of immortality, and as the builder inwardly of that structure which we call human character—if that vision is opened on a man who is full of conscience, and he feels, “I am bound to obey in every single one of these respects, but from the beginning of my life to the end of it I am sinful and disobedient”—under such circumstances there is not a man that would live. There is not a man who, with such a weight upon his conscience, will not be ground to powder. There is not a man who can bear up under such a burden and survive. Paul said: “When the law came, sin revived, and I died.” The moment he measured himself by the law, the moment he had a conception of what he ought to be, and felt that he was responsible for being what the law required, he said: “I am a dead man; I am wrong all through; I am sinful, and always have been, and always shall be, for I cannot deliver myself from sin.”

Now, then, this principle of toleration for imperfection, this principle of sympathetic helpfulness which runs through society, is to me the first twilight dawn of the Gospel conception of the divine government and of the divine nature. All men are sinners, and sin is only another word for universal human action. So it is; so it has been; so it will be. The whole creation staggers. The world is made up of men who do not know how to do, or are not expert in doing, what they ought to do. Men are full of infirmities, and out of infirmities come all manner of sins.

But when we see that by the providence of God there is developed in the hearts of men—in every relation, and more and more as they fill out the divine ideal of manhood—patience, forbearance, and helpfulness for others, not accounting to men their mistakes, in order that by help they may learn more perfectly not to make mistakes; and when we see that just so much suffering is allowed to go on with mistakes as shall keep one’s memory alert, and help one’s vigilance—and no more—nothing for temper and vengeance—only such an amount of pain being inflicted as is necessary to the welfare of the person who is being trained and disciplined—then we begin to have some conception that these things are so

because we are a part of the whole moral government of God, and because they are in accordance with the divine idea on which the government of God is founded.

It is right here, I think, that Christ reveals God's true moral government; and I think it is just this that the apostle meant, when, after going through his wonderful analysis of the struggle of an enlightened conscience, with its conditions and circumstances, he cried out in despair, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" and then instantly—"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is something in Jesus Christ, and that which he taught, that meets the universal condition of facts which the apostle outlines in his own experience, and which I have attempted to show belong to our experience, just as much as it belonged to his.

I understand that the redemption which comes by Jesus Christ assumes the universal sinfulness of the race. I understand it to assume that men, being born into life, sin as the sparks fly upward. Much of that sinfulness (I still call it by that generic term) they are blameworthy for; but, more of it they are not blameworthy for. A child is not blameworthy because he does not know arithmetic when he is two years old. A child is not blameworthy because he cannot read *Paradise Lost* when he is four years old. A child is not blameworthy because he is not familiar with *Story, on the Constitution and Laws*, at eight years old. A child is not blameworthy because he does not know how to make a machine when he is ten years old. He will suffer from not knowing things that he has not learned. It is a deprivation. It is a misfortune. And if a man does not understand the laws of his being, it may not be his fault, but it will be a damage to him. It may not be a man's fault that he has not money, but it will be an inconvenience to him to be poor. Many and many a man, in the wilderness, does not know that the berries which he eats for his hunger are bad, though they are harmful to him.

A part of our sin, then, may be called the infirmity or the necessity of the condition in which God has put us—of the state in which we work out our salvation in this world. And sinning, according to the popular acceptation, has blameworthiness in it. That which a man knows to be wrong, and can avoid, but does not avoid, is blameworthy and guilty. But all that mass of error and aberration and law-breaking which lies beneath this—the bulk of human experience—is not blameworthy nor guilty. Yet, being violation of law, it inflicts pain. Law is like a quickset hedge on the sides of a road. If you run against the hedge, even though you do it ignor-

antly or accidentally, it pricks you, and sends you back to the middle of the road again. We are all the time running against laws, and suffering from the pain which they inflict upon us.

Now, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ reveals no other doctrine than that which human experience everywhere justifies—the doctrine of universal sinfulness and universal helplessness. There is not a man that lives who does not sin; and of all sinners there is not one who does not need that enlightening which comes from his instruction and his training in the household, and in society. Who does not need that teaching which nature gives? and who does not need that illumination which can be given only by the Holy Spirit of God? Every man needs it. For with all the helps that we can get, life is an up-hill work. Unfolding is a very slow and imperfect process. Living in this world is a profound mystery; and such are its conditions.

But that thought which shot like an arrow through the apostle's mind, and which has shot through the mind of many and many a man since, is that of the benevolence of God. As in society there is tolerance toward sin and imperfection; as there is a disposition of compassion for sinners; as there is a relative attainment which patronizes those who have not attained; as there is a strength gained by experience which ministers to those who are weak for want of experience; as there is a pity which looks leniently upon mistakes; as there is a father-heart, mother-heart, loving heart all through life where men are in connection with each other; so lift up that same quality and enshrine it in the Infinite God, and put it into the infinite government of God; and teach men that as God made them to sin and be sinners, so there is an adaptation over against it of moral government, which is compassion, and patience, and long-suffering that waits to be gracious, and that the nature of God is not vengeful and punitive in any such sense as that which we attach to this term; but that it is the nature of God, having made such a world, to carry it according to the conditions on which he made it.

The revelation of the fatherhood of God by the Lord Jesus Christ is the redemption of men by hope; and it is this that gives to Christianity what the Law had not, and for the want of which it did not do the work for which it was sent. You can never administer any government over this world which shall neglect the universal fact that men are sinful; and you can never administer any government that shall treat men according to absolute sin, measured by any ideal law. You cannot control the universe on any principle which does not adapt itself to a state of things in

which sin is universal and continuous, and which does not undertake, as the physician does in a hospital, to nourish men, and to be patient with them, not accounting their sins to them.

In the first place, in view of this, the attitude of God in respect to the whole human family is not one of burning anger. It is not one of stern, magisterial watching and waiting to be just. It is not a nervous feeling of the hand for the scepter to strike down the wrong-doer. Where wrong mounts up to portentous heights, it demands some instantaneous and effectual check. Where the child in the household breaks out into a violent anger, and is destroying the happiness of others with his bomb-like temper, the bringing the little sinner to a sense of his wrong-doing is right. The pain and shame are means to an end—and if the end were served oftener, I think it would be better for many children. However that may be, the feeling of the parent is one of patient love; of patient waiting; of desiring to teach the child how to obey laws which he was born ignorant of.

In the whole divine sphere, in the bosom of God, there is simple paternity. He has not spread abroad the myriads of creation, and left them in their helpless condition, that he might punish them for coming short of obedience to his decrees. In other words, he does not measure men by an ideal standard of noble manhood, and damn forever those who cannot come up to that standard. There is not a living creature that can come up to it; there never was one, and there never will be one, as long as the world stands and laws remain as they are now. There is no getting along except by administering law in such a way that it shall fit itself to the facts of the creation of the world, as God made them to exist, and as they were made known through the revelation of God by Jesus Christ.

And that is atonement. What is atonement? That Christ gave God the right to be compassionate? That he came down to this world, and made a bargain, and agreed that he would suffer so much if God afterwards would exercise compassion and leniency toward men? Away with your shop logic! Away with your commercial theories! Go down among the moles and bats, and grope with such detestable notions of truth as that by agreement Christ came among men to suffer and give God a chance to be gracious! Over all these heresies of hell I lift up the glorious words, "*God so loved the world that he gave his Son.*" Love before Christ loved was the bow which sent that silver arrow into the world. "God so loved"—when? From eternity. Whom? The world. And what was the mission of Christ? To develop it; to disclose it.

So to live among the unloving and imperfect as to show what perfect manhood was; so to live that the lowest, and wretchedest, and weakest should be drawn to him, and feel his caress; so to live that when armed hate thrust its spear into his side, as it had driven the nails into his flesh, he should die loving. By these majestic symbols alone does the world know how to learn anything of Christ; by these symbols do we have interpreted to us that love of God which is manifested toward the universe, and which endures to the uttermost. Since death is the uttermost of our human experience, it was used as the symbol of the uttermost in the Infinite; and it is the revelation of that stupendous and glorious divinity of love which sits in the heavens and utters its decrees right and left, above and beneath, everywhere, filling the universe, first or last, with the fruit of divine benevolence.

When, therefore, Paul came to understand his experience, and see how impossible it was for him to live as he wanted to, he said: "There is the law, and I cannot walk according to it. There is the road, and I cannot keep in it. Here is the thing that I want to be, and I always come short of it. Who shall help me?" And then he looks up, and says: "Glory! God is a Being who does not demand full obedience as a condition of his loving me. He takes me in my weakness, in my sinfulness, in my aberrations, in both that which comes from infirmity and that which is guilty."

The nature of God as made known to me by Jesus Christ is such that, as a mother gathers up her little children in her arms, and both rebukes them and heals them by love, so he gathers the poor, the wretched, the incompetent, and the bad, and carries them in the arms of his love. Love is the atoning power, and God is atonement. It is out of his own loving nature that he forgives; and it is out of this same loving nature that he punishes. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," applies to the whole administration of God in the world, through time and eternity.

We may understand how, when that vision rose upon the apostle, he could say:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

And then, rising higher, he said:

"I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Is this love universal? Is the sun universal? Does it shine

for you or for me any more than it does for any other man? Whose sun is it? His that takes it. To whom is it a bounty? To him that accepts it. Is it universal? It is universal to all who want it. There be many who lose it. There be many who will not take it—who hide till night comes on, and then prowl about and miss what benefit there is in it. The loving helpfulness of God and the power of God are universal; and the word of the Lord is, "Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

O men, measure yourselves no longer, saying, "I have no hope because I find myself so imperfect." There never lived a man on the earth who was not imperfect. Do not think that your joy in salvation is to depend upon evidence that you are so regenerated, that you are quite perfect, or pretty near it. There never was a saint that walked in heaven that did not go in there as a sinner saved by grace. It is a gift of mercy and love. There never was a perfect human being. There never was a creature that came in at one side of life and went out at the other, that he did not come in and go out imperfect, and ministered to all through by the patience of God's love. We were not saved by the dying of the Lord, but by God's loving patience. Death was the symbolic measure of his love.

Who, then, is not in such a condition to-day that he can accept the love of God in Christ Jesus? Let not bad habits keep you back. Our God will help you to break up your habits. Let not your doubts hinder you. There is no one who does not doubt. There is a central loving Power—go toward that. Let not your aberrations, mistakes, and trials withhold you. The more imperfect you are, the more you need the medicine of the soul, and that is loving God and your fellow-men.

I preach to you a God that loves *sinner*s, and that administers a government of love for the sake of healing sin. I preach to you a God who loves men that are weak, and infirm, and in every way imperfect, and is buoying them up night and day, and inspiring them, and watching over them by a providence that carries them forward and lifts them higher and higher, and will continue to lift them till they shall be ransomed in the Lord. Oh, love toward that bright center! Let hope fly thitherward. Do not deny your inward want. Do not let your condemnation of yourself cease; but let not conscience become your despot. Look away from that by faith to the sanctuary, and to the love of the blessed Father. Hope and strive; *hope and strive*; and however far you have gone,

when the time for dismission comes, look not to see how good you are, nor how perfect you are, but to see how bountiful God is. Never measure yourself. Measure that Bosom, measure that Heart, measure that Love.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, as they that wake from sleep draw near to the morning at the rising of the sun. O thou Lord of light, and life, and love, we behold thy light streaming abroad. It is the coming of it that wakes us; and while we seem to solicit thy mercies, thy mercies are the reason why we are drawing near to thee. We try to find thee, and are found of thee. Long before we lift up our thoughts, behold, the impulse of thy Spirit is working mightily in us to lift them. Not from the sea comes the vapor up of its own self: it is drawn by the sun; and hiding itself in the depths above, by-and-by it comes to the earth again, to make all things blessed. Neither do our joys, nor our sorrows, nor our affections rise towards thee self-moved, or by the impulse of our will. Thou, with an ever-clear and shining face, art drawing us upward to thee. We seek thee sometimes in prayer; but a thousand times beside we seek thee in ways whose names we know not. We have cravings that reach out for some unseen and unknown God; and these are of thee. From thine inspiration come our aimless yearnings. Our petitions thou dost inspire in us. Thou dost cause those groanings which are not to be expressed—that are unutterable. Our discontent with ourselves; our discontent with the world; our discontent with our own pride; our discontent with our feebleness, and the small sphere in which we are working; our discontent with our want of harmony with the things which are round about us—these are inspired of thee. Thou dost grant unto us those visions of a better life and of a better state which put to shame the humbleness of our present condition. Thou art continually unveiling heaven to us—not in its fullness, but only so that we may see its brightness, and know that thither is our life steering. Thou, O God, dost work in us for our good. Thou dost find us as the sun finds the soil; and thy Spirit doth penetrate the soul as the sun's warmth penetrates the earth; and thou dost bring from us that which blossoms and that which becomes fruit. Thou art, O God, the Sun of Righteousness; and in us are developed the fruits of the Spirit. We rejoice in thy presence and in thy power. We rejoice that thou art such an One as that we cannot understand thee. Not that we love obscurity; but we rejoice that God is greater than the compass of our thoughts, and that thy nature is larger than ours—so much larger that we cannot gird it about even by the imagination. We rejoice that we draw near to thee, and sail across the bosom of our God not as mariners sail along the edges of the sea which they dare not venture upon. Who shall know the greatness of thy power? Who shall hear the thunder thereof? Who shall comprehend thy nature? Who, by searching, can find thee out unto perfection? We live toward thee. That by-and-by we shall rise unsphered here, and insphered there, to know thee—this is the hope and

expectation and longing of our life. We are called sons of God; and it is a blessed thought that by-and-by we shall know what that means. Now we are impelled, in all the ways of life, by forces which largely depend upon this mortal state and the clods on which we tread. What it is to be set free from the body; what it is to live when flesh and blood shall be no more a part of us; what it is to behold thy face when there shall no longer be eyes to behold with, nor forms for the eye; what the spirit of life is; what are all its ecstasies; what its further development is to be; what are to be its ennobling occupations—these things we know not: but we believe that there is to be conscious life. We believe that there are to be blossoming joys, purer and greater than any that we know in this lower state. We believe that we are growing up under thy tuition and in thy presence. We believe that we are being developed, and are to become glorious, far beyond any knowledge that we can have in this life.

And so we are saved by hope. And what, in all the round world, is there that could keep us amidst a creation that groans and travails in pain, were it not for the hope of that redemption which awaits the earth? For the creature was made subject to vanity, not by reason of his own will, but by reason of Him that created, that He might redeem. And we believe, O Lord our God, that there is a better life. The new heaven and the new earth shall yet, by-and-by, satisfy us, who are bewildered with mysteries in life; who walk at noon-day as if it were twilight, and at twilight as if it were midnight. We would not measure the grandeur of thy promises and the riches of thy fulfillment by that knowledge which we have of things here below; for we grope and are afar off from thee. And we rejoice to believe that thou wilt move upon the broad lines of thine own thought, and not upon the narrow lines of ours. We rejoice to believe that thou wilt create a new heaven and a new earth, in which shall dwell righteousness more gloriously than it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

So we are saved again by hope. We cast our hope forward beyond darkness, beyond tears, beyond suffering, beyond disappointments, beyond all mortal conflict. There, where thou dwellest, in the great unknown, unfathomable life, is our hope. And may it bring us back tidings of joy. Though we may not understand what heavenly joy is, yet give us a certainty of its blessedness in overmeasure, forever and ever.

And now, unto thee, O Lord Jesus, be honor and glory, for that love which is disclosed to us by these secrets of the future. We thank thee that thou hast tempered the law of the realm in which we dwell to our thought, and taken from it its hardness and its despotism. Blessed be thy name that thou hast revealed to us that thy heart is not of stone, and that thine ear is not deaf to the helpless and the poor, and that thou dost tenderly treasure up the sorrows, and sufferings, and troubles of men, and cause them to be as so many winds that, unknown to them, waft them on their voyage. Accept our thanks that those very things which seem to threaten destruction bring salvation.

We rejoice in all that which thou hast made manifest, and in all that which shall come when we shall read life better, and when nature shall teach us more perfectly the things which now we but dimly understand. We rejoice in thee, O thou blessed Saviour of the world. Even the thought that there is a Redeemer at the right hand of God, who ever liveth to make intercession for the toiling millions of the globe, is itself an ecstasy; and we glorify thee for the knowledge of it, and for the faith which we have of thee. We believe that no prayer comes to thee in vain, and that no sorrowing heart is unseen by thee. We commend to thee, therefore, those who are consciously sinful and erring; those who are sad and sorrowful; those who stumble, and are not strong enough to lift themselves up again; those

upon whom night has come, and to whom it seems as though there were neither star nor promise of the morning. Those that are overthrown, and those that are trodden under foot of men, we commend to thy merciful Spirit.

O Lord our God, we pray that thou wilt draw near to those who are in thy presence. Some come like the children of the morning, and are bedewed with thanksgiving and with joy. Accept their praises and their thankfulness. Draw near to those who are fulfilling vows which they made in sickness and in trouble. Draw near to those who have not for a long time been in the house of God, to whom come a thousand memories this morning, and whose hearts are drawn by tender chords running every whither. Draw near to all those who come this morning with children in their arms and with companions. What is there on earth that so pleaseth thee as our yearnings toward others, for their up-building, and ennobling, and salvation? We pray that thou wilt inspire thy people more and more to that life of faith and prayer which thou dost so love. Draw near, we pray thee, to all those who come to replenish their strength. Give them food. Give them drink. From the river which cometh out of thy throne, and from which cometh all power, and wisdom, and goodness, quench their thirst. Draw near to those who are seeking, through many clouds and doubts, to know the way of truth. O Lord, we beseech of thee that thou wilt reveal thyself to them in the simplicity of thy love and goodness. May they trust thee more than their thoughts of thy realm and of thy glory.

Grant that every heart in thy presence may be able to form to itself a thought of God full of majesty, and truth, and purity, and use all his life in loving and drawing up toward himself those who are far away and imperfect. May all thy people trust goodness. May they trust wisdom. May they trust the power that controls from the center of things, whence comes all that is beautiful; whence comes all harmony; whence comes all symmetry. The comfort of home; all things which make life desirable and which men seek—are not these ours? And do they not come from thy heart and nature? Art not thou more glorious than any glory? Art not thou more beautiful than any beauty? Art not thou more lovely than any loveliness, and more loving than all love? Grant that we may lift our hearts from these scattered sparks which reveal thee here and there, to that great glowing, glorious center which is itself the source and fulfillment of all that is good and all that is noble in life. Let all doubters, we pray thee, cast anchor, at last, in the harbor of hope. Let them not be storm-tossed any more. Reveal to them something that they can fasten faith and hope upon. May they, at last, have a hope which enters, like an anchor, within the veil, sure and steadfast.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all the efforts of thy people, in their families and in their neighborhoods. Remember our Sabbath-schools, and all who teach in them; and may thy blessing, which has followed them so many years, still abide with them. Be with their officers and teachers, and fill their hearts with divine and sacred compassion for those who are with them. We pray that thou wilt bless all that relieve the poor, enlighten the ignorant, right those that are wrong, and bring back the weak and the unwary who have strayed from the path of rectitude and all the mercies and humanities of life. Let more and more be filled with the divine Spirit and the divine power. Let truth and knowledge go forth in all our land, and let superstition and ignorance everywhere die out.

Pity the nations that are outspread on the earth, so many of whom are in degradation and darkness; and let that light which is so sweet to our eyes break in upon theirs. Fulfill thy promises; bring in both Jew and

Gentile; let the world at last be filled of thy glory, and the whole earth receive thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore.
Amen.



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken, to the encouragement of any that are desponding; to the reviving of any that are sick; to the illumination of any that are in darkness. We pray that thou wilt not take away from us the consciousness of sin, but deliver us from the crushing sense of transgression. We desire to be inspired by the love of Christ, and to live more perfect lives. We desire to walk in the light of instruction and of knowledge toward all excellence. We desire to dwell in the faith that thou art continually loving us, and helping us to do that which is in accordance with thy will. We pray that thou wilt bless the word to all who are in thy presence; and may it more and more bring forth fruit in every heart. We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

THE POWER OF GOD'S TRUTH.

"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isaiah lv. 10, 11.

In that little strip of land on the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea—to wit, Palestine, which upon the map looks almost like a line, there are combined so many elements that the figures drawn from nature there have a fitness to every clime on the globe. On the north the great ranges of the Libanus and Anti-Libanus, lift up snow-clad peaks all the year round; and in all the northern and more mountainous parts, snow descends in winter freely, and there is a real winter climate.

The southern part of Palestine, some hundred and fifty miles lower down on the edge of the Arabian Sea, and all the way intermediate, there are gradations of climate, according to the hill and valley formation, until you come to the sands of Arabia; and everything that is in fertility and everything that is in barrenness lift up images there.

In turning to the east you have the Sea of Galilee and the *Ghor*, or the valley of the Jordan; and you find that this sea is sunk six hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, being lined on either side with more or less precipitous hills and mountains. And such you find to be the case, also, with the whole flow of the Jordan to the sea. At this depth the sun pours down its rays with such intensity, and they are so reflected from side to side, that the stones are warmed to such a depth that even in mid-winter vegetation is growing there, and the tenderest plants can be found around Genesareth, and along the course of the Jordan.

So, in this land of Palestine, but little larger than the State of Connecticut, you have the epitome of the world, and of the pro-

ductions of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and a full representation of the seas and lakes and rivers on the earth. So abundant and so varied are the features of this country, that the illustrations which are drawn from it are found to be well understood from one end of the world to the other.

And it is a thing not to be forgotten, that from this land came that Word which has borne down to us the best ideas of moral truth. It is to be kept in mind that that land was the home of the Bible, and that it was the land which gave to the Bible a language that is understood wherever the sun shines—wherever there is summer or winter.

It is from the winter aspect, as well as from the summer aspect, that the illustrations of our text are taken.

“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.”

God compares his Word to these elements of summer and winter.

In the first place, what are we to understand by *God's Word*? Not what we mean by *words* in their ordinary acceptation, as so many spoken syllables. Nor are we to understand by the *Word of God*, truth in the limited circle of religious knowledge, but God's truth at large, whether it be truth of natural law, whether it be truth of civic estate, or whether it be truth of ecclesiastical development. Whatever great primary truths belong to the system of this world, and to the moral government of it, may be considered as the truth which is meant in the text. And it is the declaration of the old prophet—the inspired man of old—speaking in the name of the Lord, that truth, comprehensively regarded, is like the snow, and like the rain, and that it shall not fail upon the earth—that it shall do what God commissioned it to do.

Let us, then, look at some points of comparison. They may seem merely ingenious, or novel; but where illustrations are given to us in the Word of God, it is perfectly fair that we should run them out in their minor analogies, if by so doing we can enlarge our conception of the errand of the figures which are contained in the Word of God.

It is not an immaterial consideration, in the beginning, to reflect how the vapors which form rain and snow lie invisible before the eyes of men, far up, hidden in the heights, so that they can see no storms though there are storms right above their heads.

That which the thermometer can see of heat, men cannot see. That which the barometer can tell of pressure, men's senses cannot perceive. That which can be measured by instruments of moisture, man has no fineness of organization adequate to measure. The great agencies which control the senses are agencies which in their subtler form elude the senses, except where they have the help of artificial instruments. We, who are so proud, are not organized after all so finely as to be able, unassisted, to watch these things. And in this great aerial cradle above are rocked what storms! They grow, and have power to shake continents; but we look upon them, and see them not. No man can see them until some breath of cooler air sweeps through them. Then the whole hemisphere is wrapped with one cloud. In an instant, if it be winter, drops turn into crystals, and the air is filled with commotion. At one hour no man can see anything of storm or darkness, and in another hour no man can see any visible object upon the earth by reason of storm and darkness.

So, out of the great unthought-of and invisible realms, come truths unsuspected and undiscerned. And as it is not until the vapors touch these lower spheres and strata that they become condensed and tangible and visible, so it is not until abstract truths which lie hidden and undeveloped are unfolded and rendered concrete that they become usable and visible. It is not until they descend, as it were, and touch the sides of human experience, that we can see them, and apply them to the practical necessities of life.

Consider, also, in looking at the connection of truth with this illustration, how strangely errant, and how singularly feeble are all the advances of storms. If you have ever traversed the upper regions of our land, you have passed through clouds. As we sit in our summer homes in the White Mountains and look upon Mount Washington, we see him crowned and clouded while all is fair below. If you go to the base, and ride toward the summit, the sun shines as you enter the car, and as you begin to ascend; but when you have gone half way up, the mists gather about you, and you are perfectly shrouded in them. Yet there is not in them all any obstruction, except to the vision. You press through them easily. Harmless and powerless are these small particles, these infinitely minute globules, that make vapors or clouds. How entirely harmless and powerless they are! And when by condensation they become rounded drops, and begin to fall through the air, unaccompanied by winds, what is the storm, what are these plashing drops, but so many lullabys of nature, or so many hindrances to pleasure, as the case may be? Rain-drops, as they come down,

one after another, find their way to the ground. None of them seem to march in ranks; none of them seem to be on any errand; they seem merely to be making haste to plunge themselves upon the earth.

Snow is rain rendered more visible, being more highly organized, crystallized; but how strangely vagrant is it! Is there anything that seems to have more leisure, that seems to have more time on its hands, than the snow, as it goes wavering lazily seeking its lower level, the air being filled with flakes so that it seems as if the birds had plucked their feathers, which were flying every whither? If you take one in your hand, it dies while you are looking at it. If it lies on the ground, it lies soft and powerless. Not an infant's hand is so soft and powerless as this snow. And yet it has power to put out the eyes of all the ships on the coast, and to lay its hand upon the whole continent, and hush industry, and shut men up in their homes. No key imprisons them. This soft, plushy substance, coming day and night, blocks up all roads, stops all travel, sends the plow in-doors, and causes the creaking of the carts to cease. The oxen low in their stalls, and business over all the northern continents lies still and buried, waiting for emancipation; and the cause of all this stagnation is the soft, indolent, aimless, passionless snow.

When, however, it has fallen upon the mountain-tops, and collected there in repeated storms, until the mountains themselves have been lifted up, and the weight of the snow begins to be prodigious, then comes another power of the snow. Not the thunder in the heavens now is louder, and not the levin bolt is more fatal than the snow, when, helpless in particles, but wonderfully omnipotent in bulk, it descends as a mass, and crushes all that is before it.

Now, the truth of God has had, and has to-day, very much the same experience as this. It comes to us in little revelations. Discoveries are not sheeted and connected so as to cover whole fields of knowledge. Single facts present themselves, and men observe them, and they lie unfruitful in their hands. For years, for a generation perhaps, they have no effect; but the second or third generation, it may be, couples them together, and draws from them a conclusion. Thus some little progress is made. Thus gradually truth is extracted from the nebosity of the universe. But, after all, how slowly does it come! How disconnected is it! How vague and aimless it seems to be! The very things which to-day are revolutionizing the science of astronomy, those same facts which have led to the construction of instruments of observation

that are telling us much about the stellar universe, have been in the hands of men for a thousand years, helpless, powerless, good for nothing, apparently.

With slow increment did men learn social truths! Let any one read the history of the development of the household during the times of the patriarchs, and he will see that it has made great progress since then. We talk of the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and these phrases resound with all the knowledge which we have gained during four thousand years; but go back to the days in which Abraham and Isaac and Jacob lived, and see how mean the household was, how poor its experience was, and how unrich its social intercourse was. Go back and see what gross idolatry existed in their time, and how men supplemented knowledge, and how they eked out weakness by all the craft and lies and subtler elements which belonged to animalhood. Go back and see how, with slow steps the world has been gaining from hundreds of years to hundreds of years, through various generations. How slowly did the truths of social life develop themselves, and come to be as rich as they are in the Christian households of to-day!

Look at the theory or science of government, and see how slowly it has unfolded, here a fact and there an experiment, here a disaster, and there a success, evolving the fragmentary local truths of certain periods, so that not until after thousands and thousands of years had gradually accumulated them, could there be condensed any such theory of political economy, any such system of government, as we have now. And as rain-drops come, one by one, and mingle at last in storms, and produce rivers, and then flow down to the sea, and become mighty there; so the knowledges that are as deep as the sea, and that are as swift as rivers, running towards the sea, have come as rain-drops, little by little, accumulating through generations and ages of the world.

The mechanical power of the rain and the snow, of which we have thus far been speaking, are, however, far from being their most remarkable feature; and it is not the mechanical power which the prophet employed most emphatically as the marrow of his illustration. When the rain descends, it disappears. The earth sucks it up. It is gone. Only then, however, does it begin to do its work. The cleansing of the leaves is better than nothing, when the summer's drought has brought the summer's dust upon them; but after all, it is only when the earth has taken the rain as a chemist, and has dissolved the silex, and the various mineral elements of the soil; it is only when, having dissolved these, it has carried them as

food to a thousand little rootlets ; it is only when they have received them by that soundless power which is mightier in any field than the mightiest engine in any factory ; it is only when the roots and the trunk and the branches begin to draw up the moisture from the earth by their mighty pumping—it is only then that the rain comes to its true function.

God's truths, that fall upon the world, even while they are speculative, have a value and an interest ; but their true power does not lie in that direction. It lies not in the creed, but in that life which grows out of it ; not in any doctrinal statements, but in those experiences which are in themselves interpretations of abstract doctrinal statements. It is only in that which men have thought out, and begun unconsciously to *live out*, that the truth has its real majesty.

When truth re-appears in organization, we know it not. More than ninety per cent. of living organizations are water. If you were to take a tree and dry it to absolute dryness, I had almost said that you could carry an acre-covering oak in your hand. If you were to take the human body and dessicate it so that it was absolutely dry—supposing such a thing to be possible—one could carry himself in a thimble. The size, the weight, the vigor, is largely the swelling out of the moisture that is in the vegetable and the animal tissue. So when the rains have descended, they reappear not as clouds, not as rivers, not as the sea, but in potential forms, such as forests and harvests, covering the earth. No man points to the wheat, and says, "That is rain ;" and yet it is rain. It is the effect of rain. It is the product of rain. Nobody points to the cedars of Lebanon, or to the mighty pines and firs of the West, and says, "There is where our last summer's storms went ;" and yet there *is* where they went. They are living, organized, and hidden in other forms.

God's truths come down upon the world, first as truths which men speculatively understand, or which they sympathetically feel ; and by and by they enter into men's thought, into their will, into their economy, and become a part of manners, of customs, of laws and of institutions. Truth organizes itself into visible forms, and men seem to think that it is no longer truth. They go, therefore, to the Bible to find truth, as if it existed there in its most pure and perfect form. No, it does not.

Rain is most potential, not when it is yet rain, but when it is in the lion's paw ; when it is in the foot of the deer ; when it is in the horn of the unicorn ; when it is in the hand and brain of man ; when it has been organized, and exists in some invisible latent

form, giving to life its potency. Not printed truth is the most potential form of truth.

Go where the widow, in poverty, bears the burden and responsibility of a large family, supported by a living faith in God. There is the truth more than in creed or inspired revelation. When it has disappeared as truth and reappeared as life, then it is the truth of God as rain and snow, which, coming down in visible forms, lose their life, find it again, and are more mighty than ever. Thus it is that God's truth works, not by invisible forms alone, but by organizations.

Without pursuing these analogies and parallelisms further, let us consider a little at large the great truth that was meant to be set forth by this illustration.

I remark, first, that there is no evidence that any single truth or any single important invention has ever been lost out of the world.

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The errand of truth is a successful errand, and has been from the beginning. I believe that nothing that ever was thought rightly, wisely, and with benefit in it, has been, if I may so say, unthought. I believe that nothing which has been brought up into the realm of knowledge has ever been so lost out that the world is defrauded thereby. As there cannot be anything lost chemically, as there can only be change from one form into another, so I apprehend that there has been nothing of truth lost. There have been enormous changes in systems of theology, but they have been changes from one form to another. I believe that nothing which was true, and carried benefit in it, has been lost. There is no evidence whatever that the world has lost out a physical truth, a social truth, a civic truth, an economical truth, a moral truth, or a spiritual truth. There is no evidence that any truth has ever returned void. In so far as truths have been developed they have mingled themselves with the life of the world, and they are going on to this day still beating in the veins of men, still managing human affairs, still reporting themselves the servants of God, and still accomplishing the errands on which he sent them.

There are men who marvel at the past, and suspect that there have been profound secrets buried. Yes, some—such as were not worth keeping; such as the world could well spare; many secrets of cruelty; many secrets of oppression; many secrets of animal life—its frauds, its deceits, its rude violence, its vulgarity, and its bestiality. Let us hope that some things have been forgotten, and

have died out of the world. But where is there a thing that ever made the household brighter, or men more manly, which has been forgotten? Where is there any trace which shows that human power has diminished? The scope of thought was never so broad, the sphere of action was never so large, and the potency of human faculty was never so great, as it is to-day.

Nor is there any intimation anywhere that a single one of the instruments by which, in the olden time, men accomplished anything by the truth has been lost out of the hand of the modern artificer. To be sure, there have been stones cut in the old times larger than those which have been cut in modern times; but there have never been any cut larger than can be cut now. We could build enormous palaces, and we could scatter over the plain masses of stone, like those of Baalbec. There is no trouble in equalling every achievement of the olden time. Give us those conditions which made men worth no more than the rabbits of the field or the angle-worms of the soil; make me supreme where there are five million men; let me be absolute monarch under circumstances where it makes no difference if five hundred thousand men are killed outright in tugging with concentrated strength at vast weights; give me leave to control all their industries, and gather the wealth of a kingdom, and lavish it upon one sumptuous palace, one vast temple, and the old mutilated lions and broken sphinxes which stand in the desert waste shall, as to-day, lift up their heads and bear witness to the squandering of power and the cruelty of despotism. Thank God, men are worth so much that nobody can hustle them afield now to build such piles. We have the skill to do it; we have a better knowledge to enable us to do it; but instead of building pyramids like these, we build men's cottages.

That which made the pomp and splendor of Palmyra, Tadmor, and other vast oriental cities, the pride and shame of such miserable despots as Solomon, and Joseph his predecessor, who, under the political economy of their times, bought the Egyptian people, and made them their property—their sole possession—that pomp and splendor, thank God, is gone. It went down with the early primitive condition of the world. Now we make farms. Now we build men. Now we bring up the masses. Now we educate nations. It is not very much to make caste and class and aristocracy, or even a crowned hero. Nobler is it to take a race and make them heroic. That is what we are laboring for. And all this back-looking for instruments which are lost, is folly. Nothing is lost that we need mourn for or regret to lose. The world

has shaken off nothing that it could afford to keep. It might shake off a great deal more and be the better for it.

When you next go to the country, skirt some forest where the white-oak grows, and notice the leaves which are upon it. The white-oak is a regular old conservative. He has held on to his last summer's leaves and feebly flaunts them in the wind, as though they had juice in them—which they have not. What are leaves in winter worth? They have done their work; their function is over; and the first hour in which the spring sends young blood through the tree, and the buds begin to swell and grow, they will crowd off every one of those old leaves.

So in the world's history, things that are useful soon spend themselves, and old manners and customs and laws are shed to make way for new ones. Higher than progression is the truest conservation; and obstinate conservation is the stupidest of all backward-looking toward Egypt.

The fear which men have that religious truth will shrink and perish in the mutations of affairs is groundless. When we remember that truth is the instrument of God, the thought of the Almighty; when we consider that by it he governs men, as by physical elements he controls matter and the whole universe, then to be afraid of the progress of truth, and to be afraid that it will discontinue in the world, is to be afraid of God's fidelity. It is to doubt the Throne of the Eternal.

It is true that there are rolling on, in the progress of the great work of civilization, those revolutions which bring day and night. Every night awaits the morning. There is no night that does not find its way into the light again. And in every obscuration of truth, here and there, in this or in that community, from special causes, the darkness is but temporary. The light is just beyond, and shall surely dawn again.

Good men are thrown into a shiver every once in a while, and there is often much perturbation, as science advances, and makes known new truths, and brings them to bear as criticisms on old theological truths; but let those doubt and fear who believe nothing in God. I believe in God, and neither doubt nor fear. For God's truth shall not return unto him void. It shall accomplish that for which he sent it. It shall live. It is not in the power of darkness, nor in the power of the Prince of Darkness, nor in the power of men, to make nights long enough to put out the truth of God. It may come down in fragments; it may seem to come down ill-timed, as storms often do which disappoint men's expectations; it may come down like the rain or snow which comes in ways that

disagree with men's prejudices and organizations and beliefs; but it is a part of that procession of the universe which God projected and supervises; and it shall accomplish its purpose.

I, for one, rise higher than speculation, higher than argument, higher than conviction; I rise higher than that knowledge which enables me to say: "I know that it is true, and that therefore it must stand." I rise as high as the throne of God, and say: "Since all truth sprang from thee, all truth has in it something of thine irresistibleness;" and though it has its stages, its time of quietude, and its time to exert its power, it shall have God's omnipotence in the end. So I am not distressed nor alarmed.

And as to the moving of foundations, as to the damage which is done right and left, I have learned not to expect any good without labor-pains. Children do not come into the world as birds in spring come hopping from the branches through the window, all plumed and singing. They enter life with groans and travail and in very great helplessness. And no great truth is born, nor born again, into any custom or law, without going through travail and labor-pains.

Men say: "Do you not unsettle things when you give countenance to theories of science?" No. When you give countenance to wild theories of any kind, of course you yourself are foolish; but when the world stands awaiting the revelation of God, sometimes through holy men, and sometimes through the physical globe, at one time through one experience, and at another time through another, there is no reason to fear that the truth will be lost in going through these various channels. For we are assured that it will have free course to run and be glorified. We are assured that as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater, so the Word of God shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish the thing which he doth please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. Where one believes in that, he is prepared to meet those incidental evils which stand connected with the progress of truth. He is in a condition such that, when going through transition periods, if he is unshipped from one belief, he does not give up all others.

What are called "carries" are known in the West. Sometimes men take their boat from one stream and bear it on their shoulders to another, and launch it. It is a most wearisome task, and one not very agreeable; nevertheless, he that has reached head-waters going up one stream is glad to get a descent down another, even

though it involve the trouble of a "carry." He is willing to take all the pains required to find a better passage-way for his keel.

I suppose no farmer ever broke up an old pasture, that he did not unsettle a population of millions of grubs, black-backed beetles, and mice, together with the stores which they had laid up, and of which he knows nothing. And I have no doubt that if you were to take statistics of their opinion, you would not find one of them that, being overturned in the furrow, did not think that the disturbance of the soil had produced confusion worse confounded, wreck and ruin. Yet out of this plowing, sub-soiling, scarifying and harrowing, come the new grass, a better harvest, and a brighter future. It is worth while to plow under the old once in a while, in order to get the new. Old truths turned over and beginning to decay, are, after all, working more valiantly in their invisible states, than when they were visible, and are doing more for faith in God, and for the truth that God nourishes in his almighty bosom.

It is not you that preserves the truth, any more than it is the pickax that discovers gold, when it is used in the hand of the miner to dig gold out of the earth.

What if a dozen pickaxes, being stood together aside in the corner, after the day's work, should begin to talk among themselves, and say one to another: "We are getting so dull, and so used up, that I think we shall not be able to support these miners much longer?" Suppose they should dream, because they were employed to pick in the mountain by the hand of intelligence and strength, that therefore on them the whole success of the miners depended! And yet, men, who are God's pickaxes, are afraid that the gold, and silver, and iron, and copper of truth will be lost in this world. But God is the Miner. It is his thought and hand that use you. Not that the pickax is not a very good thing, and quite necessary for human industry: but after all, it is an instrument, and is subordinate to the might and power that are behind and above it.

God employs men as molds in which to cast his truths. Palpitating hearts are implements in his hands. He sounds out from men's affections, from their understandings, from their wills, the things which he wants the world to know. He reveals himself through them.

But, after all, it is God that is the father-truth. Men are to him only what the harp is to the hand of the harper—a dead thing, giving forth music simply as it is played upon by the skill of him who puts his hand upon it. All the world is God's harp. Out of

human experiences he is evolving those notes which by-and-by are to constitute the grand symphony of the universe. It is God that thinks, that wills, and that by a thousand ways draws men into sympathy with him in thinking and willing; and he is working out through the race, past, present and to come, those great problems of the future which we now discern only in their very germinal leaves, but which are yet to stand as trees of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations.

It is not to diminish your sense of the value of the truth that I speak thus: it is to augment your sense of the power of God, and strengthen your confidence that the truth will endure on the earth in spite of all changes, and do its mighty works, because it is from God, and will not return to him void, but will accomplish the purposes for which he sent it.

It may dampen our pride, perhaps, to reflect, in this matter, that while God has employed men to sustain the truth, the truth owes little to them, as compared with what they owe to it.

If General Grant thinks he saved the country by conducting the war to its termination, he is at liberty to think so; and in some sense it is true; but let me say to him that the war made him before he finished the war. It was the earlier conditions, it was the elementary strifes, it was the exigencies of the nation, that molded him, and shaped him into potency, and gave him those qualities by which he was enabled to help his country.

Does a philosopher think that he is the father of philosophy? He is the child of it. It made him, instead of his making it.

I hear men say that the Church has preserved God's truth in the world. There is a superficial sense in which this is so; but the true rendering is: "God's truth has preserved the Church."

Why, have you saved the sun by your candle? Is it your optical glass that has been the cause of the preservation of light? And is man's thinking about the truth the reason why that truth remains? If every man on earth were dead to-day, and not a cricket's chirp broke the silence of the universal globe, truth would stand undiminished, unchanged. And if there came up from our graves another distinct race of men, and they were led through a wilderness of ten thousand years, to the truth of God, they would come to those truths just as we have. Wherever we have made a foot-print, they would make another just like it, in discovering the truth. We do not keep God alive: he keeps us alive. We do not preserve the truth: the truth preserves us. The oil by which it burns is from on high, and not from below. And while it has pleased God to allow us, by experiments and discoveries, to learn

glorious truths, within and without, after all, it is God that works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Let us, then, take joy in the thought that the truth will stand, whatever may be the alternations of opinion; whether themes which are dear to us go up or down; whether liberty seems to recede, and despotism seems to throw a broader and broader shadow on the earth, or whether free government seems to emerge and hang on the horizon like a star of promise; whether men's opinions of religious truth seem sinking into a slough of sensuous indulgence, or whether they seem to have resurrection, and to be rising on every side with fresh power. And whatever may be the external appearance of the great realm of God's truth, remember that the marrow of truth, the soul of truth, the life of truth, is not with you, but with God who sustains it, and sustains you to discern it, and to rejoice in it. The heavens may perish, but not one particle, not one jot nor one title, of God's truth shall ever fail. The Word of the Lord standeth sure, and the truth of God is immutable.



PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE have no need to draw near to thee to arouse thy thought, our Father. We have no need to draw near to thee to make known our case, that thou mayest understand us. We have no need to persuade thy willingness; for thou dost never forget, and thou art always beforehand with thy desires, laying the path in which our desires move. At every step we find the tokens of thy presence. Wherever we go, we find that thou hast been there before us. Nor can we escape from thy sight. The morning and the evening bounds are filled with thy presence. The highest heaven and the lowest depth still find thee. Whither can we flee from thee? Everywhere we are surrounded by thee. Everywhere thy thoughts are thoughts of mercy. Everywhere throughout all thy laws, and throughout all the periods of time, thou art moving the race upward. Thou art ever developing in men a higher excellence, and in generations nobler and nobler ambitions. And we believe that yet this Earth which now groans and travails in pain, shall touch the blessedness of the new Heaven and the new Earth in which are to dwell righteousness.

We rejoice that we may come to thee, therefore, sure that thou art willing to receive us, and that thou dost but seemingly withhold anything that we need. We rejoice to believe that when we are deprived of things which we desire, it is only that our hearts may be fitted to play upon thine. We rejoice that it is only that thy heart may reach forth in our consciousness to stir us up, that thou hast conditioned thy mercy upon our supplications. Thou longest for us, and thou art teaching us to long for thee. That hard lesson which we learn so slowly, to live as seeing Him who is invisible; and that

harder lesson, more slowly learned, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength—these things thou art teaching us. And we rejoice that thou dost teach us by pain as well as by joy; by sorrow in overmeasure, as it would sometimes seem to us, but as it never seems to thee. We rejoice that thou dost, by prosperity and by adversity, in youth, in mid-life, and in old age, still pursue thy purpose of mercy. Nor shall death consummate it. We shall still go on under thy guiding hand, rising through unknown heights, through strange developments, through mighty attainments, which it is not lawful, even if we could conceive of them, to utter. We rejoice in believing that we shall hold on as long as thou dost in thine own eternity, as sons of God, and as heirs inheriting all that thou hast, and coming into possession thereof, more and more, perpetually, as our powers increase and our capacity enlarges. We look forward to the future with joy, and desire evermore to live with our eye upon the world which is to come, and to cast upon this life the glories of the life beyond, so that the paths which are obscure may be irradiated; so that the burdens which seem heavy may be light; so that our experience may be interpreted to us by faith.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt, this day, fill every one in thy presence with thy goodness, and accept the thanksgiving which many hearts offer to thee, for sparing mercies, and for thy great kindness to them.

We pray that thou wilt listen to all those who, this morning, fulfill their vows, and give thanks in thy sanctuary for promises kept. We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt draw near to all those who are under a shadow. May it seem to them, at last, that it is the shadow of thy wings. May they feel joy even in darkness, and sing songs in the night.

We pray that thou wilt be with those who are watchers, and who discern evil to come, which in their imagination takes on all fantastic forms. Grant, we pray thee, that there may be heard upon the stormy sea, and in the presence of the specter that seems to draw near, the voice of sweetness and of love, saying to them, Be not afraid; it is I. And may every providence that comes to us, whether it come with smiles or with threats, disclose itself as the will of God; and so may we ever seem to be with the Lord.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant unto us more and more patience, and more and more willingness to endure whatever thou art pleased to inflict upon us.

May we be more and more willing to abound or to suffer lack; to go up or to go down. As good soldiers, may we be willing to bear hardness in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that our faith may not fail, and that wherever thou hast placed us, severally, whether it be in obscurity or in publicity; whether it be in circumstances of ease or in circumstances of overmuch care; whether it be in a condition of wealth or a condition of poverty in any direction; however we may be situated in this world, we may have the guiding hand and the consoling Spirit of our God with us.

Wilt thou comfort such as in bereavement mourn the loss of those who were dear to them. Draw near to any that stand in solitariness, having been separated from their companions. Be with those who are strangers in our midst, and whose quick-flying memory goes far back in search of dear ones left behind.

Be with all those for whom we should pray—the poor, the outcast, the vicious, the criminal. And we beseech of thee that those who have abused their privileges in this life may be led to temperance and hearty reformation. May they return to thee now, even in the last and poorest days of their lives.

Grant thy blessing to rest not only upon this congregation, but upon all the schools which are connected with it. Bless all those who go forth to

make known the truth of Christ Jesus, and to carry instruction and knowledge and sympathy to those who are necessitous in life, and are less favored than we are. We pray that thou wilt grant that there may be awakenings and conversions in all our schools. And we pray that this church may perpetually receive from them bountiful harvests of souls saved.

We pray for all thy churches; for all thy ministering servants; for the cause of God everywhere, as it is embodied in our laws and institutions.

Bless all schools, all academics, institutions of learning of every kind. Multiply the number of them where they are needed, and build them up in efficiency where they are already established. Let those who are most ignorant have the most abundant means of instruction. Thus may thy cause be advanced in this land, and may this great people learn righteousness.

We pray for all the nations of the earth, who are the subjects of multitudes of thy gracious promises. Command that these clouds of promises shall drop down their fulfillment. We beseech of thee that the wilderness may bud and blossom as the rose, and that the whole earth may at last see thy salvation.

We ask it for Christ's sake. *Amen.*



PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant salvation to every one who is in doubt and fear and anxiety. Thou that didst open the passage through the sea; thou that didst carry thy people through the wilderness; thou that didst smite the Jordan to lead them over; thou that didst take care of them in their mountain land, canst thou not still take care of thy people? Is thine arm shortened? Is thine ear heavy? Thou art the same Jehovah as of old, Lord over all, blessed forever, and forever blessing. We rejoice in thee. We rejoice in thine immutableness. For thou art without variableness or shadow of turning. We put our trust in thy government. Though men seem to perish, none perish. Though causes of good seem to go under, they are planted and not buried. Grant, we beseech of thee, that we may have this super-eminent confidence, and that we may walk by faith and not by sight. Accept our thanks for all the bounties of the day in which we live. We thank thee that our life was cast in these times, and in a sphere of activity where so much has been permitted to us—so much to rejoice in and to hope for. And now we beseech of thee to make thy cause victorious, until the heaven and the earth are renewed and united, and God shall dwell forever among his people. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

THROUGH FEAR TO LOVE.

“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”—1 John iv. 18.

We can scarcely conceive how anything could live in such a world as this that had not the element of fear. For surely, every part of life, not alone of the human family, but down to the lowest animated particles, has to struggle for its existence. One of the strangest things in the organization of this world is the prevalence of a universal destructiveness. We are taught, and we believe, that God is a God of benevolence. We are taught, and we believe, that the world was ordained for the production of happiness. And yet, when the Apostle says that “the whole creation groans and travails in pain until now,” every one who is conversant with history says, “Amen.” Every one who looks out into life and takes cognizance of the things that are going on—the silent sufferings, the secret mischiefs, the wastes, and the wails that spread throughout the whole human family—every such one must feel that that which has been is, and will be.

When we look below the human race, we find that men are not sufferers because of their higher organization and the collisions into which they are thrown by so many stimulating influences: they belong to a system, and they are marked by the same qualities of the whole system. We find that *to destroy* is the basis of life. One race seems created to supply the appetite of another; and they, again, fattened, become the food of another; and they the food of still another. Man devours everything. And so we disintegrate the rock, and grind it to make the soil out of which the plants grow; and the behemoth, the buffalo and the ox crunch the grass and turn it into flesh; and man destroys the ox, that there may be the building up of the human frame. So that the resultant in man is the resultant of a series of destroyings. And in the sea there is no league of peace. There, fish pursues fish. And among the

insect tribes, one destroys another. Not simply do insects destroy insects, ordinarily, that they may suck their juice, and be refreshed with the sources of life, but insects live in insects; they deposit eggs one in another; and life carries death in itself.

And that which is true of the animal and insect tribes is just as true of every department of the world. The whole world is an open bath, and destroying goes on everywhere; but life roots itself and flourishes in spite of this universal tendency, resisting it, eluding it, beating it down, and overcoming it.

Now, under this state of things, without stopping to ask why such a world should have been made, it is sufficient for us to say that it is so. And how could anything exist that had not the stimulus of fear? It is the most defensor of all the passions that are committed to men. If the world were all peaceful, fear would be a torment; but on the supposition that the world is full of antagonisms and destroying influences, and that life is to be maintained and developed in spite of the difficulties and dangers which surround everything and everybody, fear is a preservation; it is a bounty; it is a beneficence.

When we see what men suffer by reason of fear, we sometimes think pitifully of them, and wonder that there should be this poison lancet, as it were, in the composition of a man, striking out and destroying his peace; but considering how men are placed, and how they are developed, fear, instead of being an endless torment, is a conservator of human life. You could not exist in your physical conditions if you were not taught by the sense of fear to watch, to look out for danger, and to reduce the evasion of danger to a habit, to an instinct, to an intuition.

A child, just tottering, could not go from here to the ferry and live. What with the rush of men; what with the wheels of carriages; what with the moving to and fro of horses; what with manifold slips and slides, the child could not get to the ferry alive. But you go to the ferry every day safely; and the safe-going represents the amount of foresight and thought and care that in you has been reduced from volition to an involuntary and intuitional stage. You go through great dangers and mighty perils without harm, because long training has rendered fear a kind of intuition in you. No man could go through forests, and over prairies, and climb mountains, and thread his way through valleys, and venture upon the sea, and visit the tropics, or the icy poles, and be a citizen of the world, going every whither, who was not armed with a vigilance whose main-spring is fear, and sharp looking in consequence thereof. The social condition of men could not be maintained

without such arming. For, so soon as we begin to gather, by our affection, the little commonwealth of the household, they live in us. We are the parental heads of the family, and we think for the children, and act for them, and feel for them, and put our knowledge and experience around about them as a garment. As we are said to have Christ's righteousness for our clothes, so our children have our righteousness for their clothes as long as they are little irresponsible infants. That which is true of ourselves in regard to every influence of fear is true of every relation in the social circle. Fear leads us to seek the welfare of those who are near and dear to us, and to watch over them.

And that which is true in respect to social relations is true in respect to moral development. For, as the world has been, and is, it is doubtful whether men could come so far up from basilar life toward affectionate life if it were not for the thrusts and the goadings of apprehension. The beginnings of morality and virtue are in fear; for, although men may finally be organized so highly that they shall work for the love of working, as men do that are in health and are well cerebrated, yet, in the beginnings, among low and rude people, men do not work because they like it. They bask lazily in the sun, and gorge themselves with food when they have it, and suffer the pangs of famine when they have it not. They learn to build houses, that they may not be exposed to the severity of the weather. They learn to cultivate the fields, that they may have food in winter. They are brought to habits of foresight and industry and regularity by the stimulus of fear. They are stimulated by the fear of suffering in themselves, and then by the fear of suffering in their households, when they begin to love them. It is fear that develops the human race in its earlier stages. It is fear that in the beginning promotes civilization. Fear is the strongest impulse toward improvement on the lower range in the scale of human life. Love is the highest element; but this is at the other extreme.

Human life begins in fear, and ends in love, working all the way up on the scale through a variety of modifications of which we shall speak in a moment. In the latter stages of development, fear loses its absolute form, and adds itself to other feelings. It mingles with them, and gives them a quality which they have not in themselves. At length it grows latent, and finally it seems to die out. And in its place stands the fruit of the Spirit. When men have become ripened so that they bring forth that fruit, it is love, joy, and peace—not fear any more. *Perfect love casts out fear.*

Here, then, are the beginnings and the endings of that great scale of the human faculties along which human life moves.

I have said that fear was the lowest and earliest condition in the human development. As men rise in knowledge and virtue, they lose the need of fear. It still remains; it may exist in some external relations as long as we live upon the globe; but in regard to our affections and moral sentiments, that fear which is indispensable in the development of a higher life grows less and less. Men take the first steps in their development because they fear; but afterwards their development is carried on by other influences.

If you plant a peach-stone or a plum-stone, the germ cannot get out until the frost has bitten the stone open. These sharp, freezing nights are splitting those stones which lie upon the surface of the ground; and when the spring comes, the germ of the inward seed will find itself able to throw down its plumule and send up its stem; and the frost that let it out, that started its growth, will have no more dominion over it, and no more function in regard to it. Now it begins to develop a life of its own, and it has the care of itself. And you might say that fear is a kind of sharp frost that opens human life, in the beginning, and then leaves it to be carried to a higher plane by other and nobler motives and instincts.

Civilization, therefore, progresses from a state of fear toward a state of tranquillity. It works through the realm of the lower appetites and passions, filled with pain, up toward a condition in which peace and tranquillity and quiet predominate, and are the characteristic elements.

You will observe, as I intimated a moment ago, that as men grow civilized, fear loses its power. When men in the lower states of life are frightened, they suffer acute pain. Fear is often terror. Frequently it exists as a panic. It exists in religious matters as a superstition. In moral elements it exists as remorse, with poisonous fangs and claws which tear the souls of besotted worshipers.

But as society develops, and as men grow stronger and larger, terrors cease, and this impact of overwhelming fear becomes less and less frequent. But fear is not gone. It has taken on a latent form. That is, it has associated itself with other faculties. It acts now as an auxiliary to all the different feelings. In the beginning it acts by itself, as I have said; but by-and-by it acts with the higher qualities of the mind; and then come all the solitudes and vigilances of love—for fear working with love produces vigilance and solicitude. Fear and love acting in conjunction create apprehensiveness. Blended together they go to make a state of mind not without its charm, and oftentimes quite indispensable to the purposes of life. Fear mingled with the lower form of intellectual life produces caution or foresight, which leads men to guard them-

selves. He who has no fear, or whose fear does not work in companionship with his understanding, plumps against anything which he happens to meet, and, grasshopper like, jumps first, and looks where he lands afterwards; but the man whose fear is joined with the intellectual faculties, ponders, measures, calculates. In business, men who are safe operators are careful. They say, "Here is this investment—what are its chances? What is the nature of the stock? Who owns it? What does it pay? When is it payable?" Wise business-men, in investing a hundred thousand dollars, act under the influence of fear. They do not know it, but it is true. They first fear that they shall make a mistake, and then they examine into the liabilities of failure and the probabilities of success. For the fear which they experience is a fear which works with the intellect, and which gives to the intellect qualities that otherwise it would not have.

Working with the moral feelings, fear is what we might call *responsibility*. It produces a sense of necessity and of obligation. It is the effect of light to illumine one side of an object, and to throw the other side into the shade. No picture can be a picture without light and shadow. Fear is the shadow, while moral sentiments are the high lights of our better experiences. But fear becomes latent. As it becomes less and less apparent, it produces less and less suffering, and seems to give a kind of vitality or sharp edge to the thoughts, and a sort of higher inspiration to the social and moral elements.

And when, at last, men have, by culture and training, passed out of the lower and voluntary states into the higher and involuntary ones; when habits have been formed, and have clustered themselves into groups, covering the whole circle of the mind, so that character is the result; when pain has done its work, and men are set upon that which is right because they love right, and not because they are afraid of penalty; when fear has wrought out its negative fruits, and inspired such growth that men come to the positive side, and love brightness because the sense of brightness is gratified; and love truth because there is that in them which is attracted by truth; and seek goodness with their whole social and moral being, because they are so lifted up that they hunger and thirst for it—then fear has no longer any function. Now they have risen to such a state of purity and of beneficence and of likeness to God that they live in a higher sphere, and on a nobler plane, and work by the positive attractions of good, and not by the fear of the mischiefs of evil. But this is a long course. It is the final result. It is not the beginning, but the ending, of our training in life.

With this brief analysis and statement of the functions of the progress and the development of fear as an educating element among mankind, let me say, first, that men who cry out against fear in religious teaching are crying out against that which has been the benefaction of the world, and the world's consolation. Usually the men who have the most need of fear are the most opposed to it. Usually the men who have the least need of fear are the men who are most willing and most desirous to be searched by it, to be found out, to be tried, and to be proved. In our day, in the glorious development of the nobler features of the divine moral government, there is a tendency to illumine the character of God. I sympathize with it with all my heart and soul. I have tried all my life long to help on this very thing, and to make the character of God seem so beautiful and noble that men everywhere should be unwilling to let such a faith in God die out in the world. I am one of those who do not believe that it is possible to maintain the world in the faith of Christianity, or the faith of God, if you put a hideous despot on the throne. It will not do to tell men that they must worship such a God. There is many and many a man with a noble nature and with noble sentiments who would rather be damned than to worship some pictorial gods which have been set up before the human imagination and the human mind.

In the character of God as a beneficent Father, as a wise Law-Giver, as One in sympathy with men on account of their wickedness, and as One whose very supreme business it is to unfold man's nature, and carry it up to the highest conditions of life—in this character of God my heart is bound up. But there is an incidental evil which springs from it.

Men hastily say: "If God is the great Father of the universe, and if he loves all his creatures, why do you undertake to preach to us the fears and terrors of his frown, of his scepter and of his penalties? We may be coaxed into the kingdom, but we will not be driven, and we cannot be scared into it."

In regard to those who say this, it is ordinarily true—not always, but ordinarily—that they are the very men who do especially need fear; for, while they say that they may be drawn into the kingdom, their life shows that they are not susceptible to those milder and gentler influences which are brought to bear upon them in common with others. If I may so say, they are not yet sufficiently ripened. They are not yet carried up to that sphere in which they can do the works of true manhood by the attraction of goodness. As yet they are so low in the scale that they must

needs have the ruder treatment. For, though we may exaggerate fear; though it may be employed in disproportion to the necessity which exists; though it may spring from a most unworthy source, as, for instance, from the popular but abominable representations that are made of the devil, or from the outrageous representations that have been made of hell, yet there is a way in which it may be wholesomely employed.

The rendering of oriental figures into occidental scientific facts; the taking of imaginative illustrations, and reducing them to abstract propositions—this work has been carried on until men have justly revolted from the barbarities and atrocities which have reigned upon the earth.

When I look into the Word of God, I see no representations of the fallen spirit that are unbecoming. When I see what wickedness God permits among men, I know of no presumption against the existence of a spirit that fosters pride, and cultivates selfishness, and tampers with love, and inspires avarice. Men do these things; and it is no more difficult to suppose that spiritual agencies do them than that human beings do them before our sight. If God permits us to act wickedly, there is no reason why we should not believe that he permits those who are out of the body to act in the same way. But that behorned, behoofed, betailed monster, which comes from the legends of the mediæval ages, offends every feeling of respect, and disgusts every sentiment of justice, and shocks every generous instinct of our nature. I think that the pictorial representations of Satan, the judgment, and hell, as they have been spread upon walls by Michael Angelo, and as they have been reproduced in later times by the German artist Cornelius, are enough to make one renounce his faith in manhood. They are abominable beyond any expression of words. And for one to attempt to inspire righteousness in a community by the preaching of sensuous terror, drawn from sources where extraordinary means of interpretation are employed to cloud the sacred truth in the Word of God, I know not why men should not revolt at it. Wickedness brings suffering. There is no reason for supposing that suffering for wickedness stops at the grave. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe, according to the testimony of the Master and the apostles, that as men go out of life with a fixed character, they carry the liabilities of that character beyond the grave with them. More than this, we scarcely can say that it is not a general truth that those who do evil here carry the effects of that evil on hereafter. We know that they suffer in the world to come; and that fact is legitimate ground, and ground enough, on which to

appeal to fear. But when we undertake to swing the immense cope of darkness over a lurid pit of fire, and arm imaginary brutes with all manner of beastly instruments of torment, and represent the vast *cuisine* of the eternal region as a place where men are roasting forever and forever, and God is sitting calmly and looking on, a man that can look that in the face, and believe it, is, I think, almost bereft of his reason, to begin with. To follow a child to the grave, and let him through out of sight, and to believe that there is a God who forever and forever rolls him over and over as a sweet morsel of damnation in hell, and then say, "Our Father"—it is not possible. It contradicts the highest and noblest instincts of human nature. But if my child lives violating the great laws of humanity and spirituality, suffering as he goes on, and if he lives this life unrepentant, unchanged, and goes into the other life to carry on the same indulgence of pride and selfishness, and to neglect all conscientious duty, I believe that still he will find himself subject to the same punitive laws to which he has been subject on earth. I believe that the violation of right in this world brings suffering here; and that is enough. Horrible, and to be stigmatized as unworthy of God, and incompatible with his character, are the representations of the penalties of the future as they have been multiplied, and magnified, and bestialized by the mediæval imagination. But it does not follow that fear is to have no place in moral teaching. It does not follow that there may not be an argument of fear which shall address itself to every wrong-living man. There are reasons of fear—reasons in a man's own body; reasons in the relations which he bears to the structure of society; reasons in every element of his being; reasons in this world, and reasons in the world to come. Fear is really more potent than those motives which inspire men to industry; to the accumulation of property; to the search for wealth. The reasons for seeking after virtue and true religion are broader, and more urgent and more vehement, with every right-thinking man, than those for seeking after prosperous living in this world.

Now, if one cannot be drawn toward right living by the love of it, he is in need of fear. If he is on a lower plane where he is not susceptible to the higher motives, by some means he must be aroused.

If, when a fire breaks out in a dwelling, we can stand at the foot of the lower stairs and shout, "Fire! Fire!" and wake all that are sleeping above, so that they rush from their rooms and save themselves, we will stand there, and cry, "Fire! Fire!" But if that wakes none of them, we will rush from story to story, and

beat upon the door of each room, and cry out with noise and vehemence, "Fire! Fire!" If that is enough, we stop; but if not, we break down the door, and take the sleeper, stupefied by smoke, and bring him to consciousness. But if that is not enough, we seize him by the hair of the head, and drag him down stairs. We do whatever is necessary to rescue him from his peril and danger.

If the voice of the Spirit and the Bride, sounding through the air, day and night, saying, "Come;" if the voices of your children sweetly syllabing through the air, "Come;" if the voice of your wife, if the voice of your husband, if the voice of your mother, that taught you to speak, crying, "Whosoever will, let him come"—if these voices be enough, they shall suffice. But if they be not enough, then we will bring earthly voices; we will add considerations of character; we will persuade you to live a life of morality and virtue. And if these things be not enough, we will ply you with fear. We will not exaggerate. We cannot. We will refuse to draw from false sources. We will not bring any allusions of superstition and of magnification—elements which have been employed as auxiliaries to fear—but we will bring all the influences we can to bear on your conscience. We will wake up your understanding. We will stimulate everything that is in you to a wholesome fear founded in reality, and if need be reduced to scientific forms. For fear, to those who are low down, is God's medicine, his watchman, his schoolmaster; yea, it is the nurse of that which is good in base men. It is that which men who are degraded cannot live without.

When men, therefore, say, "You must not fill your sermons with fear; you must rely more on hope," I say, "Hope for those who are susceptible to hope, and encouragement for those who are susceptible to encouragement; but fear for those who are susceptible to nothing else." We will apply to you whatever motive is adapted to your case. Do you want sweet solicitation? You cannot have it simply for the asking; but carry your life and thought up to that elevation where you are capable of being affected by it, and we will minister it to you. If you sit down at the bottom of the scale, and can only be moved by acerb influences, then fear must be employed to move you. It is God's ordinance, his decree, under such circumstances. If men will perform their duties from higher impulses, so much the better; but if not, then fear must deal with them, or else they will perish.

We see, then, how it is that the words of our text are true, and that *perfect love casts out fear*.

While the teacher and the fractious pupil stand over against

each other in hostility, there must be a foundation for authority in the school—usually a physical foundation of fear. There is great moral suasion in a stick that you do not use, if it is only known that you will use it when occasion requires. The way not to whip children is to let them understand distinctly that you will whip them if they do not do the things which are proper without whipping. When once they understand that, you do not need to whip them.

In the household it is the same. Much whipping is great folly. It shows how unthorough you are. When the foundation of your authority stands in force, and in a force that knows how to punish, and how to punish so that one does not choose punishment, but prefers obedience, it is wise. Never strike if it can be avoided, and never strike twice if you can help it. Let it be thorough, entering into the very marrow of the bones.

The teacher and the child stand at first in a disputed sovereignty. "Who is master?" "Can I be compelled?" "Shall I be governed?"—these are questions asked by the child. And all arts are resorted to, all excuses are invented, all resistances are interposed, all collisions are courted; and the child is disobedient. He goes as far in the direction of disobedience as he dare. He does not do right things except when he is compelled to by fear of the ruler. But little by little the teacher wins his confidence, supplements his weakness, provides for his amusements, is gracious, and, as it were, carries him, and ministers to his wants in a thousand unexpected ways. And the time comes when he looks up to his teacher with love. And now he is more than willing to obey. He is ready to do works of supererogation, to perform more tasks, coming early and staying late. He is more industrious than he was. And he is working now, not by fear of the ruler, nor by fear of the master's eye, but by that love which has inspired him.

I remember the instance of a pale woman, who taught a village school in summer. One rude boy tried her very soul, and there was a strife of some weeks before she gained the ascendancy; and some months passed by before her spirit conquered his, and he became, not an abject servant, but the servant of love, so that, although he was stronger than a dozen of her physically, though he had the power rudely to discompose her spirit, and stamp out the order of the school, not her shadow moved more obediently to her movements than he did to her wishes. For he loved her, and *love casts out fear*. That which in the beginning she compelled him to do, and which he did very poorly, afterwards he did with eagerness, and a great deal better. For the inspiration of love, when

men are prepared for it, is a nobler inspiration than that of fear. It is more comprehensive, more fruitful, more beneficent. And while it has its efficiency in this life, it has the promise, the signet, the earnest of the life which is to come.

In proportion, then, as we advance in the Christian life, it is right that we should watch for this change. If you are moral and virtuous because you fear the consequences of immorality and unvirtue in this world, you are not going wrong; but fear being the motive from which you act, you are low down on the scale. If, on the other hand, you do right, not because you fear the consequences, but because your soul spontaneously goes out toward right things, then you are rising past the middle of the scale, and coming into its higher region, where you will be associated with the invisible world. If now you render that obedience which God requires because you love him, because your love to him is regnant, because it searches the inward man and refreshes your whole being, then you have come into that advanced condition in which fear will hardly be felt any more, as it will not be needed; and you will abide in that condition which is called "the fruit of the spirit"—in the condition of joy and peace, which is the antithesis of fear.

When one has gone through the struggles of early life, and the combats and rivalries and strifes of middle life, and by discipline, step by step, has risen to a state of serenity toward the end of life, is there anything more beautiful than that ripe, rich character of the matron or the patriarch? They are no longer able to work with the hand; and yet, in all the world there are none that work as they do. Yet, they are pictures of divine beauty, and they stand over against the eyes of those who see them—children and neighbors—representing, in a concrete form, the beauty of virtue and the beauty of piety. Therefore God often prolongs their days; and though they can add nothing to the world's store, although they consume much and produce nothing in the physical world, they are a treasure that cannot be estimated. They are the joy of the household; for no family is well equipped that has not the grandfather's and grandmother's chair, and the baby's cradle—emblems of the top and bottom of life. The latter represents sweetness and innocence, and the former represents the victory that has been gained over fear, and the ripeness that is characterized by peace, and trust, and holy joy, and love.

God grant that we may not dwell under bondage, and hear the cracks of the whip of our taskmaster Fear. God grant that though we may be under the dominion of fear in the beginning, we may gradually emerge therefrom, and more and more rise in the mo-

tives of life till fear passes quite away from our knowledge, and we reach that serene atmosphere where God calls, and everything within us says, "Here am I!" And out of that beatific state, that land of Beulah, that delectable mountain, may we look, yea, fly, over into the city, and be forever with the Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Father, with conscious imperfection. If we were to think only of our manifold transgressions; if we were only to bring before us the opportunities that have been lost, the motives that have been inferior, or even the sins that do so easily beset us, and that have so often carried us away as a flood, we should have no courage and no hope; but thou, O God, art merciful. Thou forgivest iniquity, and transgression, and sin. And when thou dost forgive, there is no memory of that which is forgiven. Thou dost wipe away from the book of remembrance all the evil which we have done, and receive us. Our pardon effaces the past; and we stand reconciled to thee, renewed, beginning again, upheld by thy grace, and inspired by thy Spirit. We are no longer weighed down by the burden of old sin, nor by the memory of past transgressions. In the freshness of thy lenity and thy love, we mount up, and we easily pursue our way, if haply, by-and-by, we may reach that land where there are no temptations; where there can be no sorrow; where all that tempts is gone; and where former things have passed away, and blessedness abides forever.

O Lord our God, we beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanksgiving for that redemption which we have through Jesus Christ our Lord. O thou blessed Saviour, that hast suffered in our stead; thou that hast been perfected by suffering to become the Captain of our salvation, we rejoice in thee, and we rejoice that thou dost sympathize with us. Not to us art thou He of the grave; thou art not the crowned of death: thou art the loving Saviour, to our thought. Thou hast both power and supremacy, above every throne, every dominion, and every name that is named. But thou art, in all the royalty of thy power, yet our Friend; and though we cannot rise to the conception of thy glory, we understand what it is to be loved, and we rejoice in all the amplitude of the expressions of love which thou hast left upon record for thy people; in all those words which glow with the summer of love toward them. This is our strength, and this is our hope. In ourselves how contemptible we are! How easily are we biased! How all our passions are swayed hither and thither! How all our happiest feelings are warped? How readily are we destroyed! But if thou dost love us, and surround us with thy watchful providence; if thou, by thy grace, dost, from day to day, watch over us, and support us, who then shall harm us? Who shall destroy those whom God hath chosen? If God be for us, who can be against us? In the hope of Jesus we stand. In that hope we can abound. In that hope, through darkness and through light, through winter as in summer, we march on, and look forward to that more glorious redemption, when, not by types and shadows, but in reality, we shall be lifted into thy presence to see thee as thou art, and to be like thee.

Draw near, to-night, we beseech of thee, to those who would find their

way to thee. Give them wings as angels, descending and ascending, to bring messages to their souls.

Draw near to those who ask thy strength; to those who walk in darkness; to those who are in discouragement; to those who feel the burdens of life galling their shoulders; to those who have the cross, but not its consolation. Grant, we pray thee, that thy grace may be sufficient for every one that is in thy presence.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the families of this congregation. Strengthen those who are appointed as priests in the household to instruct their children in the fear of God and in the love of man. We pray that they may fulfill their duties faithfully, as in the presence of God.

Bless, we pray thee, all those for whom our prayers should go forth—the prayerless, those who have long since forgotten the God of their fathers. Look upon all those who are cast out by men, upon all who are sitting in desolation, and upon all who are suffering the torment of their sins. Look upon all those, we beseech of thee, on whom thoughts gnash cruelly. We pray that thou wilt grant them repentance, and that peace which comes from reconciliation with God, and that mind which thou canst make. Bear with them. May thy truth go forth, a sympathizing Gospel, to the poor and needy. Bless those who preach in jails, and prisons, and hospitals, and those who go out into the highways and byways after lost sheep. Grant that the Spirit of the Master may be with them. And may they reap while they sow. May their joys abound even in the midst of their work. And so may they have on earth abundantly the remunerations of thy providence, with all the hope of heaven beside.

And now, Lord, we pray that thou wilt bless this church in all its labors, all the churches of this city, all the churches of the great city near us, and all thy churches throughout this land. May there be times of refreshing everywhere. May the power of God be manifested by the speaking of the truth. May men be aroused from indifference, and restored to true morality and humble piety. And we beseech of thee that this whole land may be renovated, and that the name of the Lord may be glorified among this people.

We pray that these blessings may be, not for us alone, but for all nations; and that the time may speedily come when all the earth shall be converted to thee.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt bless the word spoken, and grant that it may do good to every one. May those who are living in their sins, those who are living in the love of the world, in its evil forms, be aroused by dangers and perils; and may they be inspired to begin a nobler life. And may those who have entered the battle be brought out speedily into victory. We pray that all of us may have that filial fear which carries with it reverence, and obedience, and uplooking toward God. And may we all have love. If fear is the beginning of wisdom, love is its end; and may all our fear lead us to the bright serenity of a joyous love. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*



WEAK HOURS.

“And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: and Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.”—GENESIS xxv. 29-34.

These scenes, some parts of which I have read to you, when read with interest are almost as good as a journey into a foreign land. New phases, new geography, new manners, new customs—very old, so old that they are new (and there is nothing so new as that which is very old)—these things present themselves. Strange ideas of morality, crude, germinant and imperfect, are presented. And yet, withal, strangely mixed with faults are eminent virtues—faults of the times, of inexperience, of rude states of society; and virtues, native and conspicuous. And so were various experiences mingled, forming a piebald picture.

There was that noble old chief, Abraham—a fine old gentleman; a gentleman, but timid, and lying without any hesitation to save his own life. There was that son of his, Isaac, who, like his father, lied, under the same circumstances, to save his life; but who, otherwise, was mild, sweet-tempered, preferring to yield ground rather than to fight. And Isaac it was to whom the wife Rebecca was sent, the account of which I read in your hearing, and during the reading of which none of you went to sleep—for who is there that is not interested in young love, or anything that leads to it?

Rebecca became the wife of Isaac: and there was given to her a pair of twins, the first born of which was Esau, so called because he was covered with hair, rough-skinned, and rugged—the very epitome of force. The other was fair; and he was called Jacob.

Now, there seems to have been in the family that which, if it

exist, should not be made manifest—a relative partiality. The father took to one of these brothers, and the mother to the other, but they ought both of them to have taken to each. It is not in human nature not to like some children that are better born than others; but it ought not to be shown—certainly it ought not to come into the management of the household. But what is strange in this story is, that the father liked the one that we should have supposed the mother would have liked, and that the mother liked the one that we should have supposed the father would have liked. For usually women like strength, and a certain sort of high chieftainship—a carrying of one's self with power and freedom and genius. That was Esau all over. On the other hand, a father—a *good* father—ordinarily takes to the boy that is thoughtful, and meditative, and obedient, and docile, and stays at home, and keeps things right. But that was not so in this case. Isaac did not like Jacob. At any rate, he did not take to him. Jacob was the mother's pet. And perhaps the reason is not far to find. There is something in counterparts. That something we want. We like that of which we are ourselves somewhat deficient. Jacob, whatever else he was, was not very valiant; was not an enterprising man; was not a person of great physical manhood and prowess; and Esau was. On the other hand, another principle came in. We like likes; and Jacob had in him the old blood. Rebecca, sweet as she was when she let the pitcher down from her shoulder in her maiden simplicity and innocence, and the round rosy color of love and beauty, was a manager. She had craft; and so had Jacob. They were well matched, mother and son; and they were naturally fitted to each other. So the mother came to love, not the one that we should have thought she would have loved—the robust, enterprising, valiant, manly fellow—but the one that stayed at home. Not the one that dwelt quietly with his parents, and promoted the interests of the household, but the one that wasted time and squandered goods, running about as a hunter, the father liked.

It is said that because he made venison savory for his father, therefore his father liked him. Yes, he liked him for that, no doubt; but he liked him on account of the whole spirit which led him to be a hunter.

This narrative, from which I have selected the text, is one of an entirely ancient character; and we must step out of modern ideas in order to get really at its true standpoint.

You have no brother that you can sell. There is nothing which pertains to rank in brotherhood among us. Here, the first born is no better than the last born. But in the ancient time, and in the

families of the old patriarchs, as to-day in the Bedouin families, which resemble them very closely, the eldest born was chief, and to him came the government of the tribes, as well as almost all of the possessions; and in many instances he was not only the temporal chief, but the spiritual head. *Birthright*, therefore, meant inheritance of government, with all its honor, its dignity, and its responsibilities.

Now, when you come to look at these two brothers, and at this transaction, the Scriptures seem to put the fault on Esau. I do not believe, however, that there is a man in my hearing who has not felt, when listening to the recital of this event, that Jacob was a sneak, and that Esau was abused. I cannot conceive of any conduct more unmanly than Jacob's was. His brother came in from the fields where he had been hunting, overspent with traveling, and faint with hunger; and it is very evident that Jacob, though he did not speak the words, said in his mind: "I will take advantage of his condition." And how he carried out his purpose the account shows. What Esau said was this: "Feed me, I pray thee, for I am faint; I am at the point of dying." I will not say what a brother's feelings would naturally be at such a time; but I will say that a stranger who would not be moved to pity when a man was ready to perish for food, and would not give it to him if he had it to give, would be a brute. What did Jacob do—sly Jacob; politic Jacob; diplomatic Jacob? He had his eye all the time on ambition. He said to himself, "I have got him; now I will make a bargain with him. He cannot refuse me anything." And he said to Esau: "I will give you my pottage if you will give me your birthright. Exchange positions with me; let me be chief, and you take the place of the second born, and I will feed you." Was there ever anything meaner, more inhuman, more unbrotherly, more wicked, than that?

As to Esau, it is said, "Thus he despised his birthright." This is the only comment that is made. And in the New Testament it is alluded to by way of warning, where Esau is spoken of as one who, for a morsel of meat, sold his birthright, who afterwards, when he would have inherited the blessing was rejected, and who found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

Well, was it his fault? Yes, there was a great deal of fault on his part. You are to recollect that this circumstance indicates a very low moral tone in him—a want of appreciation of all that was involved in chieftainship. There are many things that a man would rather die from hunger for than give up. There is many a man that would sooner die than yield up love. There are some

men living, I hope, who would rather die than be untrue. There are many exalted and precious instances of manhood scattered all along the periods of history, and there are ten thousand more in obscure life, which God sees and men do not, where persons, for the sake of manhood, for the sake of lofty principles, for the sake of noble sentiments, for the sake of deep convictions, have given up everything and suffered everything. But Esau had so slight a conception of all that belonged to the dignities and responsibilities and labors of the first born of a household or tribe, that he gave them up rather than hunger. He ought to have died on the spot rather than sold his birthright. His conduct was vulgar and contemptible—and all the more because he could not sell it. He agreed to sell what he could not transfer. It was a Wall-Street transaction, and a “corner” at that; for it was not for him, but for the patriarch Isaac to convey the blessing, and give authenticity to the transaction. So there had to be another scene.

Jacob knew very well that this bargain which he had forced on his brother in a moment of extreme suffering would not execute itself. He knew that Esau, notwithstanding his promise, would be chief if nothing more was done. Therefore steps were taken to consummate the work which had been commenced. And at this point the mother figures largely—that beautiful, sweet, simple, genial, pastoral Rebekah, that darling girl who so excited the steward’s admiration, and who so cheered Isaac that he said, after his mother’s death, that he was comforted. You cannot tell, when you look at a seed, what the blossom is going to be; nor can you tell, when you look at the blossom, what the fruit is going to be. This crafty, shrewd, managing Rebekah took the affair in hand, and she sought to consummate by all manner of deceit that which was begun in inhumanity. She dressed Jacob, according to the old Testament account, in kid skins, on a given occasion, when she learned that Isaac was about to confer the distinct marks by which the chieftainship should pass from him to his son Esau. She also put on him Esau’s dress. Likewise she had a kid brought from the flock, and made the pottage which old blind Isaac loved. And while Esau was out hunting for venison, she sent Jacob in to the aged patriarch. He feigned Esau’s voice, and put out his hands for the old man to feel, whose suspicions were aroused, notwithstanding all the precautions which were taken to cover up the deception—for when a man has lost the sense of seeing, the sense of hearing and the other senses are very keen. Isaac questioned Jacob, and said, “Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.” Jacob went near to his father, and

he felt of him, and said, "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Suspicion still lingered in Isaac's mind, and he said, "Art thou my son Esau?" And Jacob said, "I am." And having smelt of his raiment, and felt of his hands, and questioned him, he concluded that it was Esau indeed, and pronounced the blessing upon him.

No sooner had Jacob left the room—for doubtless he made haste to leave it—than back came Esau with the pottage of nice venison which he had made for his father, and asked for the blessing. Then the deception is discovered; Isaac tells Esau that he has given the blessing to another; and bitterly does Esau cry, "Bless me, even me also, oh, my father! Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" Yes, there was a blessing for him; but the first was gone. The chieftainship had been bestowed on his brother. That which had been sold, but which could not be delivered by the seller, had now been stolen by fraud and by craft.

And yet, leaving out of sight the way in which this result was procured, it was just the right thing. What sort of a leader would Esau have made—this impetuous man; this man of temper; this man who used his force hastily; this man who followed his impulses? If you were going to found a nation, if you were going to administer the affairs of a community, after all, the patient, fore-looking, calculating Jacob would be the better magistrate. He would bring things together better. He would know how to be politic among discordant men. He would know how to knit the edges of that which would otherwise ravel out. He was a better administrator and a better diplomatist than Esau. He ought to have been born first; it was a mistake that he was not! But the thing having taken place, and all having been said about it that ought to be said, everybody takes a long breath, and feels that it was lucky for the nation that it was Jacob, and not Esau, that received the blessing.

Well, those two brothers may be set forth in the history of men, as representing two great elements—mind and matter. Here was Esau, who represented brute force, which is always at the moment strongest, but at the end weakest. And here was Jacob, timid, cautious, politic, and thoughtful. At the first, such a man always seems to be inferior; but in the end he always comes out ahead. So it was with these two patriarchs. To the end of his life Esau was a man of valor; and if Jacob had resorted to force Esau would have swept away all his possessions; but Jacob managed him. When he returned from his uncle Laban's with flocks and herds, Esau came with bands to meet him; but Jacob was too much for

Esau. If they had gone to battle Esau would have smote Jacob hip and thigh; but diplomatic Jacob fixed it all right. He talked so smoothly that he conciliated Esau, they made up their quarrels, and one went down to Edom, and the other went back to Palestine.

Now, in the history of the world does not strength of muscle perform an inferior part? Is it not thought, is it not foresight, is it not connected thought, is it not persistent thought, is it not brain, that in the end governs? Muscle is very good, but it takes the second place. It may be first-born, but its birthright is gone just as soon as the brain has a chance to manage and contrive. It is thinking power that governs. And if men are low in society, it is because their brain-force is low. If men are high in society, as a general rule it is because intelligence goes toward the top. If, therefore, men would be superiors and leaders, thought-power must be developed in them. If men are content with physical power, with brute force, with mere outward acquirements, they must take the second place. They may be first-born, but they will come out second.

But that is not what I was going to preach upon to-night. I want to call your attention to the fact that the mistake of Esau in selling his birthright, which was in the national history so disgraceful, was the result, not of a career, but of an hour of weakness. If he had been taken an hour before, he never would have made such a bargain. If he had been taken the day after, he could not have been persuaded to make it. He was caught at just that point of time when everything in him was weakened. His body was exhausted; his mind flagged; his courage had faded away; and at that unfortunate moment temptation was brought upon, and he fell.

Now, I want to say a word to you on the subject of your *weak hours*. It is said that no chain is stronger than its weakest link. It is true. And when the strain is brought to bear upon a man, he is no stronger than he is in his weakest hour. Taking men without shelter, without that defence which they get from institutions, and without that succor which they derive from each other; looking at them simply in their own separate individual standing, they are as strong as they are in their weakest hours, and no stronger. Events show, continually, that all the efforts, all the industries, all the progress, all the good things of a whole life, may be destroyed by one weak hour, so that men may seek for repentance, carefully, with tears and anguish, and find no place for it.

What, then, do we understand by *weak hours*? They are various, and they come from various causes. There are many of

whom it may be said that their weak hour is their strongest. That is, many persons are placable, are kind, are fruitful in friendship, are wise, when they can keep down their temper; but they are simply insane when their temper is up; and they may do in a single hour that which shall wreck the rest of their life. One rash, hot hour, may overthrow forty years of caution and prudence. It is temper set on fire of hell that is their destruction.

Other men have their hours of weakness in avarice. That is, there are hours in men's lives when their lust and greed of gold is exacerbated. We call them *weak* hours, although the temptation of their greed is *strong*. Those are hours of weakness in which the power to resist evil is weak. A man is weak, not by the power that assails, but by the want of defensive power.

It made no difference where the assault was made at Gëttysburg on the third day, by the adversary that attempted to pierce the center of the lines; and it made no difference that they came after a perfect whirlwind of cannonading; for the resisting power was greater than the attacking power. That is an hour of weakness when the resisting power is *weak*.

Now, nothing is weaker than the conscience when it is paralyzed by the touch of avarice. There is such an appetite in some natures for gold, that although at times they are manly and good in a thousand respects, at other times, when avarice dominates, their moral sentiments are paralyzed by it; and those are their weak hours.

There are some men whose weak hour is connected with their passions. There are some men whose weak hour is in the lower grade of pleasures. There are some men whose weak hour is in eating. There are other men whose weak hour is in drinking. Oh, how many noble men have been girdled, how many men of genius have been utterly destroyed, how many persons of hope and promise have been completely overthrown, by intemperance! Such is the nature of things, that those who are cold and selfish are seldom the victims of drink. Thirsty and bibulous men are almost always warm-blooded, sensitive, companionable. Free-hearted men, who like to throw their arms round about their companions' shoulders, and lean upon them, are the men who are most easily tempted, and who are most liable to run into excesses. There are many men who are excellent, and are built up right all around except on one side. Their weak hour lies in the direction of drink.

There are many men whose weak hour lies in their appetites. They are strong in conscience, and strong in reason; but their appetites mislead them.

Now, every man knows his own weakness, or may know it. Whatever passion, or appetite, or dominating motive in one's life has such ascendancy as to blind the reason and quiet the conscience, produces his hour of weakness. Sometimes grief, sometimes weariness from overwork, sometimes discouragement, sometimes loneliness and desolateness, sometimes pride, sometimes vanity, according to the nature of the person, leads to his weak hour. There are hours in which one seems to be in the supreme possession of a single malign influence, whatever it may be. And if temptation is brought to bear upon him then, he is led to reason as Esau reasoned, and is carried away as by a flood.

The dangers that are connected with these hours of weakness are manifold; but where persons are surrounded by the family they are saved, for the most part. There is, however, scarcely a boy brought up from the cradle to an honorable manhood, and confirmed in virtue and integrity, who does not do things in the family which, if known, would bring stigma upon him for life. But such is the nature of parental love, that it swallows, as in quicksand, all trace and remembrance of these things. Oh, how many lies a mother forgets! Oh, how many meannesses pass from a mother's memory! Oh, how many disgraceful little freaks does a mother sink in the oblivion of forgetfulness! Oh, how many things which send the child home in disgrace from the school, from the playground, or from the earlier contacts of life, are forgotten there, which, if they were made the tests of his character, as judged by his fellow-men, would be his ruin! The child's faults are hidden at home; and it is the arm and heart of the father and mother that hold him and redeem him. They suffer for him vicariously, they reassure him, they comfort him, they put him on his feet, and they start him out again. There is many a man that would be branded as a thief if all that is known about him inside of the family were known outside of it; and yet he comes out honest. There is many and many a man who would be denounced as a liar, as a perjured villain, if other people knew all that his father and mother know about him; and yet he stands up in the midst of life as a man of truth. Many a man that is honored would be dishonored, if it were not for the household. The family is as a spring on a hill-side, by whose moisture the grass and the flowers are nourished and made beauteous. But, after all, do you understand how much it is a fort? Do you know how many times it saves a man from enemies that run after him, and shelters him until he is strong enough to meet them?

We see, then, why it is that those who have no household have

such hard work in life. We see why those youth who are sympathetic and easily molded are swept away by little violations. We never hesitate to condemn them when they go wrong. We do not stop to think that we may be worse in the sight of God than these urchins who have neither father, nor mother, nor shelter. It does not occur to us that, if like them, we had had to make our own way, we very likely should have had more faults than they have. We do not make allowance for our advantages over them in having the protection of the family.

Consider, then, the dangers and perils to which men in society are exposed who have no shelter; who have no place where they may hide from temptation.

In New York there has been a man convicted of murder, who, in an hour of intoxication, struck down a fellow passenger and slew him. That one deed, committed in his hour of weakness, has altered his whole life, and changed his whole eternity. It was an act of but an hour—no, of but ten minutes—no, of but one minute; and yet it has shaped his destiny.

A man oppressed, goaded by his affairs, says: "I have no business to forge a note; but, after all, it will not be known; I will take it up, and it will do no harm." So he signs the note, and turns it over, and writes a name not his own on the back. There are two, there are three such notes; and he tides himself over his difficulty with them. He deposits them, and they are discounted. One comes due, and he pays it, and nothing is known about it. The second comes due, and he pays that, and nothing is known about it. Just as the third is coming due he is taken sick with the bilious fever. When it comes due he is on his back, and out of his head, and it is sent to the endorser, and he swears that it is forged, and the man is caught. He did not mean any harm by it, but harm comes from it. I presume that there are some men in this house who have such notes out: may God keep you from a fever! In an hour of weakness a man may do that which, being detected, will ruin his whole life. Afterwards he may say: "Fool! Fool!" Yes, *fool!* But it is too late.

In hours of weakness, what words that pierce like a poisoned dagger may you not speak! And though, afterwards, you try to wash out the blood with tears, it will not be washed out. What separations in the household have taken place from the inflammation of a single hour! What crimes have been committed during undefended hours! Into what dilemmas, into what profound dangers, have men flung themselves, by the heedlessness of a weak hour! What avails it that you are strong in your hours of

strength? When health is co-incident with good fortune, when home is happy, when business is prosperous, when the air is full of oxygen, and everything promises well—then men go forth; and how strong they are! How they parry the thrust of temptations, and pierce them, and achieve victories over them! But by-and-by the strength runs out; the weather changes; affairs are at cross-purposes; they are wearied and turmoiled; things go hard with them; they are half crazed, and scarcely know what they are doing; and some temptation turns upon them on this corner or on that, and seizes them, and has dominion over them. In their strong hour they were strong enough: it is in their weak hour that they are weak.

Here is a precipice full five hundred feet high. All around are steep rocks. Nobody is going to climb up these. The defense is complete with the exception that there is one little narrow path that winds up from behind, and is undefended. The fort is strong enough at every point but that. The engineer neglected that point; and, taking advantage of it, the enemy will assail and destroy the fort. He goes around, avoiding every place but the weak one, and there he converges all the force of his attack.

When the enemy of men's souls desire to conquer them, he does not take them when they are on advancing waves of progress, or upward flights of faith: he does not take them when they are calm, composed, and strong; he does not take them when they stand in serried ranks, holding one another up; he does not take them when they are prospered; he waits and watches that he may catch them in their weak hours, and then overcome them. Therefore it is that we are taught to be vigilant, to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. For no man knows, when he has once entered into temptation, how he is going to get out of it.

What, then, shall we do in this matter? There are, as you know, storm signals in all our ports, inland and maritime; and no prudent captain puts out to sea when the storm signal is up.

There are signs and signals of warning in men's lives which they may know; and no man who cares for himself will put out when he sees that he is going into a storm squall—into a hour of weakness and peril. Remain in port, keep snug, do not leave the anchor-ground or the pier at such times. Hold yourself where you can get help. Avoid that which experience has shown you to be dangerous. If you have learned what it is, and where it is, do not go into it.

When the barometer begins to fall, you shall see, off the coast between Halifax and New York, staunch steamers, schooners,

brigantines, all sorts of craft, making one way—homeward; and one who has been captain says, “They have smelled the storm, and they are wise in seeking to escape it; for we are going to have a rouser.”

When men are out on the sea of life, there are signs and tokens of storm which the barometer of their own experience reveals to them. And let them spread all their sail, and make for port as quick as possible. Let them not run risks. Let them hide until the storm be overpast. It may not seem a very courageous thing in a man to hide; but it is a safe thing. When you cannot meet the adversary, elude him. Resist him, and make him flee, if you can; but if you cannot make him flee, rather than that he should take you captive, run yourself.

What are some of the safeguards, then, against those perils? Of all places to be marked for avoidance are those on which you have fought a battle and failed once, twice, and thrice; but chiefly when men are in danger in their weak hours—then is the time for them to avail themselves of institutions. Says one man, “I have easily besetting sins. I am striving against them, and when I have overcome them I mean to join the Church.” Now, the Church is a fort into which a man should run, that he may fight better for his life against the adversary.

A man says, “I am full of diseases from head to foot: and as soon as I get cured of them I am going into the hospital.” What are you going into the hospital for, when you are cured?

The Church is a hospital where men may be cured. The Church is a bulwark that hides men from the stroke of battle. The Church is a school-house. It is a father’s or a brother’s house. It is a family, all the members of which are striving to help, as far as they can, those who are associated with them. The Church is a mutual insurance company, in one sense. That is, those who belong to it are striving to help each other to be better, the Scripture being their charter, and Christ being their exemplar. It is an institution in which men are trying to save their fellow-men by throwing about them the silken cords of sympathy, and giving them the right hand of fellowship, and teaching them to help themselves.

Many a man that has been lost would have been saved if he had gone into the Church, and said, “I am weak, and in peril, and there are hours when I do not feel myself able to stand: brethren, hold me up.” If a man comes into the Church saying, “I have met with a great change; thank God, I am safe; and I come in here to shine”—if that is the spirit with which one comes into the Church,

and if he can come in so really and truly, we want men for lanterns and headlights all along the road, and it is not a bad thing. But then there are multitudes of men who might well come into the Church, saying, "Brethren, give me a harbor. There are storms after me, and I cannot stand the sea. Give me anchorage." Let such men in. Give them shelter and protection. What is a Church good for, that is not good for helping sinners? Men say, "Take care of the Church." A Church is not good for anything except for what it can do for men. Is a hospital built to look pretty and to be kept clean and pure? What is a hospital good for, but to receive persons who have diseases, and to cure them? A Church is good in the proportion in which it helps men who cannot get help elsewhere; and the more desperate is the case of the man whom it rescues, the more noble is the Church. Well, what about its own reputation? Let that go. *He that would save his own life shall lose it.*

In these weak hours one should, as far as possible, avail himself of the privileges of the household, or the privileges of fellowship. There are a great many temptations that are like bubbles. They swell up before you, and have in them all the colors of the rainbow; they are exquisite; and if you put your finger on them they are gone. There are a great many temptations that, if a man could touch them with the finger of friendship, would burst, and disappear forever. And in this matter, let your mother, or your wife, if you have one, be your counsellor. If you have not mother or wife, then take into your confidence any woman that will befriend you, who is a true woman, and who will give you wise counsel. Or, if you are so situated that this may not be, take some good man for your confidential friend. And let me tell you that the temptations which are the most venomous and dangerous are oftentimes entirely destroyed by going and saying to your mother, your father, or some one else in whom you confide, "I am tempted to do so and so; and I am tempted beyond what I can bear." It is wonderful what a safety there is, sometimes, in speaking out concerning the thing which is acting as an inflammation in your bosom—for many temptations are like fermentations; they keep working, working, working; and silence seems to make them work. As yeast works best in darkness, and as seeds sprout best underground, where the heat reaches them, and the light does not, so many temptations play in the imagination, and work in secrecy. And men, not understanding this, think they are persuaded by the devil. But at times you will dissipate the temptation, you will disfranchise the danger, if you

will make it a matter of confidence. Go to some one. You are too proud? That is your only safety! You are so proud that if you should go and tell another your trouble, after that your pride would keep you from running into danger. It breaks the charm, sometimes, to speak of a thing to yourself even, and still more to speak of it to another. Go to others and tell them how you are imperiled, and say, "Watch for me! Help me! Save me!"

I never knew a person who, when the undertow had swept him out, would not lift up his voice, and cry, "Help!" Men are caught by the undertow of temptation, and are being carried down to destruction, and they see one and another and another who might succor them, but they are too proud or too self-confident to ask for help, and before they realize the extent of their danger they are swept beyond the reach of aid. How many persons might be redeemed if they would avail themselves of the assistance of others!

I recollect the case of a clerk, an acute business man, an intelligent book-keeper, favorably situated, who was invited into society, and into society above his level. His ambition was gratified, but the expenses were greater than he could bear, and he was ashamed to say to his companions, "I cannot afford to train with you," and so he fell under temptation. But what could have been wiser than for him to have gone to any honorable persons in the circle where he moved, and said, "I am living on a salary as a book-keeper, you invite me to your houses, I am obliged in some way to reciprocate; and, to tell you the truth, my friends, I am tempted to steal from my employers," thus making a clean breast of it?

There are many things that a confessional is good for in the Roman Church; but there is no better confessional than the ear of an honest man. Therefore let every young person who is beset by temptations go to some one and say, in simplicity and honesty, "I am tempted—help me." Do not you suppose he would be succored and delivered from that peril in time to come? Whatever your temptation is, whenever you are in danger, no matter what snare has caught you, and is dragging you steadily along, nearer, nearer, and nearer to destruction, make bold outcry, and there will be some one who will hear your wail of distress. If there is the solicitation of evil following you, and beckoning you, and gaining power over you, run to somebody; seek some counsellor; resort to some friend. No matter how much your cheek may mantle with blushes, it is better than that you should put it off till by-and-by, when it will do no good.

Take care of these weak hours. It was when he returned from a violent chase, begrimed with dust, and threw himself down, and

seemed in his faintness, about to die, that Esau sold his birthright. How many, since, have sold their birthright—their honor, their purity, their honesty, their integrity! Beware of these hours of weakness.

Finally, let us spiritualize this matter in regard to the whole of life, as well as in regard to special parts of it. We are all of us the sons of a King. In some sense every man may say, "I am first-born; I am a child of God, elect of heaven, born to dignities, to scepters, and to the righteousness and blessedness of an infinite estate; but I am tempted, in the turmoil of life, to sell my birthright for fame, for pleasure, for pelf, for ambition, for appetite, for lust." Many and many a savory mess of red pottage there is presented to men. Satan turns to account every single want of your nature, and says, "Sell me your birthright—I will give you pleasure; sell me your birthright—I will give you strength and honor. Why should you throw away the charm of your youth? Why should you not take the joy of the dance? Why should you not live a life large and free? Why should you not enjoy the society of gay companions? Come, give me your birthright, and I will give you all that your heart can desire." So, many and many a man sells his soul for a mess of pottage. And when life has gone down to its dregs, how bitter they are to his taste! How many look back in their old age, with inexpressible bitterness, and say, "It is too late!" And how many, if they could stand here in their last days, and look upon the faces of the young, would say to them, "Oh, in the name of God, take warning from my example! If I had a chance to live my life over, how differently I would live! I have thrown it away. It is too late for me; but it is not too late for you!"

Oh, dying men—all of you who have your life yet in your hands, and who can yet go to the right or to the left; all unchained souls who can yet feel the inspiration of truth and honor and righteousness—beware of these weak hours: beware of them in things temporal and in things spiritual. Do not sell your souls for that which will at last seem a most contemptible price, and die forever.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Draw near to us, our Father, that our thoughts may help themselves, and find their way unto thee. May we measure our spirits upon thine. Borne up by thine inspiration, may we have some realization of thy wisdom, of thy goodness, of thy greatness, of thy power, to us-ward. May we have some blessed consolation in thy promises, in the hopes that are set before us, and in that new and living way which Christ has opened.

We thank thee for the revelation of the truth in Jesus our Lord. We thank thee that he hath brought so much out of heaven down to earth; that he hath represented in himself the possibilities which are in us, that we may see in his example the perfect manhood for which we should strive. May we rejoice that we are able to discern the Father in the Son. May we be able by thy Spirit to enlarge more and more our conception above the letter, and beyond it, and to interpret something of the height and depth and length and breadth of that love which passeth understanding. May we rejoice in Christ, not fearing his power, but beholding love upon his brow, measuring it by this, the crowning truth of all that we know, that he was willing to lay down his life for those who, being sinful, were his enemies. May we rejoice in that love, in its plenary power, in its patience, in its cleansing and healing qualities; and may we be glad that we are not dependent upon our wisdom alone; that there is inspiration and guidance for us; that there is, invisible, but working all around about us, by the grace of God, help in every time of need.

Be pleased, we pray thee, to shed light upon our dark hours. Be pleased to give strength to us in our weak hours. Be pleased to revive the life that fades from our memory. Grant that thy truth may be ever present with us. And when we can find nothing else, and our souls are like the prophet in the wilderness who cast himself down, and prayed that he might die, let thy messenger come to us as he came to him. Send to every one thine angel to cheer and comfort.

And we beseech of thee that our faith in thee may never fail. Though men fail us, and though we fail ourselves, may we still cling to thee. Though surrounded by multiplied temptations, we fail, may we rise again. Though we be cast down, may we not be destroyed. Though we be perplexed and grieved, and go astray from thee, hurting ourselves, yet may we be held by the mighty hand of God unto salvation. And grant that we may behold, afar off, the bright, shining city, and hear the voices that call to us—remembering whom they loved upon earth—Come, come. And hearing, may we say, one to another, Come. And may the Spirit perpetually say to us, in the silence of the night, or in the noise of the day, Come. And so may we feel ourselves drawn evermore toward him that loved us and gave himself for us. And may we not walk with our heads cast down. May we not walk as men in prison. We are free in Christ Jesus. We have become thy friends, and are no more thy slaves. And grant that we may be able to walk with thy conscious dignity and with thy triumph perpetually upon us, and to rejoice at the dispensations of God in his providence, day by day, knowing that love cannot hurt us, and will not overburden us, nor suffer us to be swept away by temptations which we cannot bear, and that every trial will open the door of escape.

Will the Lord be pleased to manifest himself thus to every soul, especially to thy servants who have long served thee, and who are drawing near to the end of life. Grant thy blessing to those who are in the midst of life, bearing the burden and heat of the day. Be with those who are despondent. Strengthen those who are weak. Grant that they may stand for their com-

mon Master, under all circumstances where thy providence shall place them, valiantly, bravely, lovingly.

Wilt thou be pleased to grant thy blessing to rest upon the young. From the beginning, consecrate their being to thee. May they commence aright, and continue to grow stronger and stronger to the end.

We pray that thou wilt be merciful to any who are out of the way; to any who are tempted; to any who need succor. Be near to all who are beset with evil. Lord, look down upon them with compassion. Are there not many in thy sight for whom prayers have been offered, but who have gone astray? Are there not children who have wandered from the admonition received from mothers in their youth, who have defiled themselves, and are bound up in the pleasures or wickednesses of this world? We pray that thou wilt bring them to a remembrance of the past which shall take them over the flood which is sweeping them on towards destruction, to the days of their childhood, to their mother's consecration, and to the purity and simplicity of their home. And may there be some who shall begin again, and count the time sufficient in which they have wrought the will of the flesh. Are there not some in thy presence to-night who shall begin this hour to serve their God, turning away from sin, and strengthening themselves in all righteousness?

We beseech of thee that thy Spirit will take care of any yearning hearts that there may be. May the spark not be quenched, may the flame not be extinguished, may the bruised reed not be broken, until thou shalt have brought forth judgment unto victory.

We pray that thy servants may be more and more devoted in prayer; more and more earnest for the salvation of men; more and more vigilant in looking after those who are round about them; more and more desirous of helping one another, bearing one another's burdens, and succoring those who need help.

We pray that that Spirit which was in the Lord Jesus Christ, of love and patience and fidelity, may be in all his people. May we grow therein, and abound therein.

And now we commit ourselves to thy care. Who is there that can take care of us but thyself—thou of the wounded hand, thou of the pierced side, thou that hast worn the thorn? What are we that we should not be pierced? Thou didst suffer for our sins; why should we not suffer for our own? Thou didst suffer for others; why should not we suffer for ourselves? Thou that hast had compassion, and hath compassion, to whom can we come but unto thee? We shelter ourselves under thy wings. We look up to thee, and lay our burden upon thee, and trust in thee. Living or dying, we are the Lord's. Be pleased, thou unwearied One, to accept the offering which we bring of ourselves to thee; and keep us near to thee. And when, at last, we shall pass from the shadow to the substance, from the twilight to the full day, from the vision to the realization of God, be pleased to administer unto us that immortality in glory which thou hast promised unto thy servants.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be the praise evermore.
Amen.

THE ORIGINAL
PLYMOUTH PULPIT

SERMONS OF
HENRY WARD BEECHER

In Plymouth Church, Brooklyn

FROM STENOGRAPHIC REPORTS BY T. J. ELLINWOOD

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SPIRITUALITY AND MORALITY.

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—**MATT. xxii. 37—40.**

This sentiment was uttered, not once nor twice alone: it was made the root and foundation of the divine government on earth. It was repeated in manifold forms. It was caught up by the apostles, and made to be the center of their system, and was in different ways uttered by them through all their teachings.

The antiquity of it is to be considered. Although we believe in the development and growth of things in time, it is a fact that the divine character is delineated in the very beginning of the Israelitish history, of three or four thousand years ago, with all the clearness, and all the fullness and delicacy of touch, which exist now. Time has added nothing to it, and has taken nothing from it. The portraiture of himself which God gave to Moses stands still unblemished and super-eminent. And though men have found out a great many things; though a great many better modes of interpretation for old things have been discovered; though principles have been opened and developed, and their applications have been made known; though the physical structure of the earth has been investigated; though the increased knowledge of creation has thrown much light upon human life, upon morals, and upon moral government, yet no light has been thrown upon the substantial elements of the divine nature. It shone as bright in the beginning as it does to-day. And so, the divine purpose, the grand aim of the divine government in this world, has been manifested. There has been a development of the race along the line of a true love-principle, working toward the spiritual and toward the physical, toward the invisible and toward the visible: that is, working in both of man's natures—his bodily nature, placed in a physical

world, and, as a creature of time, surrounded by innumerable associates: and also his soul-nature, which views things that are ineffable and invisible, and which is conscious of rare qualities that transcend sensation, and partake of the atmosphere of intuitions and inspirations. In regard to both of these natures there is a grand development of the divine injunction, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself*. Here is this twofold view. We have a true development of the nature of spirituality, or the religion of sentiment; and we have also a true development of the essence of morality, or the religion of conduct. The one relates to that which is invisible—to the grand realm of influences and truths that bear upon the future; and the other relates to the realm of visible acts, and to existences which belong to the present and the practical.

We have then, in this command, both morality and religion springing from the same root, and inseparably joined. Neither is separable from the other without disaster. They are not made to grow on separate stalks. They are branches of the same tree. Nor can one be properly balanced and developed without the action of the other. They are not two elements in accidental juxtaposition. They are philosophically connected.

There are some whose disposition it is to make religion the chief thing in the whole life. It is their thought to stand apart from the great bustle of the world, to be religious interiorly, and to carry up the imagination, and the reason, and the moral sentiments, by the culture of meditation; by discipline of various kinds which apply to the development of soul-forces. They meddle as little as possible with practical matters, for fear that they shall pull down the spiritual. They count the hours which they spend, as it were, under the sun, as so many hours of wastage, while the hours which they spend above the sun, winged by faith and hope, they count as so many hours of real vital existence. They think themselves to be good according to their measure in this upper sphere of spiritual religion. They quite undervalue the other thing. Not that they are without conscience; not that they are without a sense of wrong which accompanies the evolution of practical morality; but they are afraid of practical morality. They are afraid of it because they have seen how often men have stuck thereon, and made it their only religion. They, rebounding from that, go to the other extreme and make the chief element of religion consist, not in the conduct of men here, but in their affection toward God; in their thought of the invisible life; in those higher sentiments, in whose praise

too much cannot be said, but which after all are partialisms, and which without practical morality are imperfect, and cannot but work great harm and mischief.

Then, on the other side, there are those who attempt to exalt morality, who disparage the religion of sentiment, and who count hours of prayer almost as hours of superstition, and hours of meditation, of rapture and of ecstasy, as so many things to be suspected—as at the best enthusiastic and fanatical. “As to life,” they say, “we know that to be honest, to be truthful. To be industrious, and to do about as well as we can in our sphere—we know what that means. That is good solid ground. If a man does as well as he can in this world, that is about as much as we can expect. As to this cloudy mist in which men fly, we have very little opinion of it.”

Now, these two elements are indispensable to each other. I hold that there can be no true spirituality without the leavening and quickening influence of a true morality; and on the other hand, I hold that there can be no true morality without the life-giving power and augmentation of a true spirituality. I hold undivorced the unity of the supreme command, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind, and thy neighbor as thyself*. The two portions of this command are to be kept together. They are not so much counterparts as different sides of the development of the same great element of love in the human soul.

Spirituality without the practical side, without eminent experience in the development of itself in worldly things, tends toward vagueness and unsatisfyingness. It tends toward enthusiasm, which in itself depends largely upon organization and excess of stimulation. It tends toward idealism, which, in its very nature, as it exists in men, must be filled with imperfections. It is the soul's painter. It creates new landscapes. It forms pictures of new places. It represents new circumstances and new histories. By idealism, or the poetic fancy, we reconstruct (from materials taken out of our own experience to be sure) the universe. We make new combinations, and clothe them with new beauty and new life. All these elements of spirituality which work through the imagination, and without which there could be no spirituality; all these tendencies to idealization; all these religious reveries, if they result in nothing more, are scarcely better than gorgeous dreamings of the night.

But if men are as much allied to ethical religion as to spiritual, then the practical side is constantly bringing down this idealism.

All the visions, under such circumstances, which open before men, are tempered by the duties which they are performing on the earth. For when men, in their hours of meditation, would bring out from the vast invisible realm a portraiture of the God whom they fain would worship, where shall they find their colors? From what palette shall a man paint the outline, and fill in the features, and represent the glory of God? Where are the materials with which to do these things to be found, but in practical life, and in one's connection with his fellow-men? We derive our best thoughts of God from the highest forms of conscious, sentient existence in ourselves and in our fellows. And, little by little, by purification and augmentation, we attain to higher conceptions, which we transfer, as it were, to the divine nature; and these become our God.

It has been said—and if it be taken without extravagance, and without excess of imagination, it is true—that while we are ourselves created by God, every man, on the other hand, creates God for himself: not in reality, not in personality, not in the everlasting whole of which we know so little, but in a certain sense. The picture which comes home to us of God has first to be made personal to us by being created from the qualities of which we have knowledge. For if we knew not what justice was, from some experiments of justice; if we knew not what mercy was, by some earthly conception of mercy; if we had no idea of goodness, from some intercourse among our fellow-men; how could we understand the moral teaching of Scripture which represents God as just and merciful and good? Words would have no power if they did not suck up their meaning from our home experience, and from our knowledge of men among men. From these sources we gather the materials out of which we create our God.

As when the sun would make pictures in the heavens, it draws moisture from every brook, and every river, and every lake, and from the sea itself, to form clouds; and then, striking its rays through them, paints the morning and evening glory, so man, when he would make heavenly pictures, gathers the primal elements, the first experiences, the throbbings through which the Divine mind shines with varied color. Earthly knowledges are the foundations on which men build their notions of heavenly things. If you are cut off from intercourse with society, you are by the same operation cut off from the possibility of fashioning a God, personal, near, real, and a present help in time of trouble.

So spirituality, where it is disjoined from the ethical side of human life, or is out of proportion to it, runs into a moral consciousness, a kind of religious egotism—the most offensive form of egotism,

which runs into mysticism, and has a disproportioned emphasis springing out of it in human life.

There be many who are exceptions to this rule. There is a selfishness in every faculty. That is, whoever uses any one faculty for his own good—especially for his own good as separable from the good of those around about him—uses it selfishly. Even conscience may be selfish. Kindness itself may be selfish. Yes, and love is selfish. Much of worship, and much of piety is selfish. Many tend so to separate themselves from the sympathies of their fellow-men, from the great work of human life, and from ordinary moralities, and so to develop piety in themselves, that they are an exclusive class lifted out of the sphere of lower human influences, and become self-culturists of the worst type—spiritual self-culturists. On the one hand, there is the school of self-contemplatists, the school of Goethe, the school of Boston; and on the other hand, there is the spiritual school—the school of Madame Guyon, and that class. Both schools alike are characterized by exquisite selfishness. Other people are selfish in rude ways; but the selfishness of these people is of the higher qualities. The garments which they weave in the airy loom of the imagination are selfish. They are given to introversion. They say, “O soul! what shalt thou have? what shalt thou feel? what shalt thou enjoy?” while the worldly man says, “O body! what wilt thou eat? what wilt thou drink? what wilt thou wear? how wilt thou live in order to be happy?” Both classes are worshippers of self, and of self in such proportions that they become odious. The only men in Jerusalem against whom Christ uttered denunciations which it makes one tremble to repeat, were men who belonged to the school of self-culturists. They were the Pharisees. They were men who had left nothing undone which it was becoming to do, and who could stand and look upon the whole sphere of human life, and brazenly face God, and say, “What lack I yet?” Against them were issued the most terrific denunciations of the Gospel. But while without ethical development, without practical life, without observation of the duties which belong to men among each other, men are partial and imperfect, however spiritual they may be; if, on the other hand, they make morality the strong point, and deride spirituality, then they become low, vulgar, narrow, secular, extremely unfruitful; and what fruit they bear is of the lowest kind. For men need to have the range of their being enlarged, they need to have their conceptions of life augmented, by making themselves familiar with spiritualizing elements. What men’s duties are, depends very

largely upon their spiritual apprehension of the range of duty. What manhood is cannot be learned from the requisitions of society, nor from neighborhood morality. A knowledge of what a man is to do to himself, the ethical part of a man's life as applied to himself, depends upon enlarging his sense of what is becoming in a true manhood. What a man is to do to his neighbor can hardly be found out by law. The law says, "Thou shalt not," twenty times, where it says, "Thou shalt," once. The law is but a defense. The law stands between me and my neighbor's orchard or garden, and says, "Thou shalt not climb over, nor break through and steal." But it does not say that I shall have an orchard of my own. The positive parts of human law are but few; and those few are of the narrowest and lowest type. The commands of human law, for the most part, are such as these: "Thou shalt pay thy taxes; thou shalt perform military duty; thou shalt do this thing or that thing." In the main, the laws of society have been laws designed to keep one beast from tearing another. All the way up, men have been separated from each other by such laws. Human law bears the marks of historic origin, and stands to-day a vast set of negations. It is not without its permissions and positive sides. But still more significantly is it marked by the opposite characteristics. No man can have much conception of his relations to his fellow-men who only asks what the laws of society demand. It may be hard for some men to be as good as human laws require them to be; but such a one must be a very small man, or a very bad man. A man who is only as good as the laws of the land in which he lives compel him to be, is a very undeveloped man.

We need the spiritual element to enlarge the ethical—to give it scope, and application, and width, and depth, and vitality.

Morality alone has not horizon enough. It is the conduct of men toward their fellow-men, who are actors, not in a sphere bounded by threescore years and ten, but in a sphere which represents the ages. Our actions belong to the realm of eternity.

I remark, in view of this brief exposition, that men are accustomed to organize on one or other of these grounds what they call their system; and then as to the other part, they scarcely know what provision to make. They usually are afraid of it. They misunderstand it and inveigh against it.

Then you will find, even in the pulpit, those who are so intense in spiritual religion that they teach false philosophy, really producing the impression that there is little or no ground for encouragement where there is not entire faith. There are many preachers of the Gospel who leave on the minds of their congrega-

tion the feeling that unless one has been born again, and **has** a true spirit of faith, all his obedience, and good works, and moral conduct, are worth nothing. And I declare that where the Gospel is so preached, a false witness is borne, and a mischievous effect is produced.

I say, as a vineyardist, that on vines goodly leaves are admirable things, on their way up to something that is better. I am after the cluster; and the reason why I value the root-stalk and the leaf-growth is, that I see them to be instruments and foundations from which come that which is higher than either of them. They are indispensable to the production of that which is esteemed far more highly; and if I should become so enthusiastic over grapes that I should tell the young horticulturist that the roots and leaves were good for nothing, and that if he had not the cluster he had nothing, I should mislead him. Do clusters grow in that way? Is there no relation between the grapes and those other things? I say, "Except a man be born again he shall not see the kingdom of God;" I believe that the life of the Spirit is the true life of manhood; but I say that, on the way up to it, if you have not the highest form of piety, it is a thousand times better to have those things which are below it, and tend toward it, and are next to it, than to have nothing. There is no form of morality that it is not better to have than to be without anything. And yet, how often do we see men so careless in this matter as to emphasize and augment the claims of spiritual religion exclusively, leaving almost no impression whatever that there is any value in moral elements?

And why do they do so? Because those who are over against them are doing the same thing in the other direction. They are saying, "Let a man work; let him be industrious and frugal; let him build up his morality; let him educate his children well; let him pay his taxes, and all his honest debts; let him act kindly towards his neighbors; let him do good as well as he knows how, and he will not need to trouble himself any further. Good square conduct in these matters is about all that can be expected of a man in this world." So men antagonize each other, and by actions and reactions drive each other apart.

But why not unite both of them? Why not say that the grand unity of love is manifesting itself in peace, the social elements working out through moral dispositions? And why not say that the same spirit is working in the higher realm toward hope, faith, trust in God? Why are they separable? Why should the working-man be no more than a cooper, a carpenter, or a shipmaster? Why

should he not blossom? Why should not a man who does well by his family and his neighbors, and who is a good citizen, do well by his soul, and be a good citizen on a higher plane? For he belongs to the universe, as well as to this world. He belongs to eternity, as well as to time. He belongs to spiritual eras, as well as to secular periods. And both are needful. Therefore stop not with the leaf; stop not even with the blossom; but go on to the fruit. Nay, let the fruit swell out and be as the beginning of that divine manhood which knows how to take both sides of the law, and fulfill them both—namely, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself.*

Just at this time we need to bring this matter into consideration, because there are thrown out, incessantly, recriminations and reproaches by those of one side against those of the other. During a revival period, when spiritual interest is at its height, when the whole community is aflame, when the hearts of the people glow with religious zeal—a thing which, with all its faults, is very desirable—then it is that the poor moralists suffer. Then it is that men speak extravagantly of spiritual elements, and count all things as good for nothing which are not imbued with these elements, and look upon that man as wholly wanting who is not acting under the influence of the Spirit, and who does not coruscate and scintillate in prayer and sacred song. They assure you that there is no hope for a man who is without an abiding faith in God. They account all things else as sheep for the slaughter, and are, among the moralists, like Herod among the innocents! But by-and-by, when some of the spiritual minded get into trouble, and, being human, show to the world a weak side towards political or commercial or legislative corruption, the moralists turn upon them, and say, “That is what they call religion! There is religion for you! That is the way religionists do!” So they throw stones, and make up for the abuse which they received from the spiritualists in times of revival. The two classes push each other, in that way, backward and forward. And so the spiritual Christian has said that morality was good for very little indeed, and the moralist has said that spiritual Christianity was good for very little indeed. The Philistines have hurled their bolts at the Israelites, and the Israelites have paid back all their scores.

How much better it would be if there were no such divisions, and all men believed that all men are alike sinners! It would be a most salutary thing if all men recognized the common infirmity of human nature. Human nature is poor stuff. It is bad material to build with. It is the best we have, but it is poor; and the con-

dition of it in this life is marked with imperfection. This being so, it is all the more sad to see men pelting and piercing each other. It is as if there should break out an insurrection in a hospital, and fever patients, and dropsical patients, and rheumatic patients, and consumptive patients, and lunatics, should jeer and rail at each other on account of their respective infirmities. All men are struggling with temptations from above, and below, and on every side; and there is not one of them that does not need the encouragement of his fellow-men; there is not one of them that does not need charity. All of us need the divine pity. We should sink and go to the bottom were it not that God fulfills his own command and loves us, and loving, loves to the end. A true spirit of benevolence would lead us to love God with all our heart, and our fellow-men as ourselves, and bring the spirituality and the morality of men into the same family, and join them together, so that the moralists shall have the illumination of spirituality, and the spiritualists shall have the elements of true morality.

I remark, once more, that the world has never seen either side developed in the full inspiration of love. What has morality brought forth, except in rare and single instances? What whole bodies have ever yet made an exhibition of true morality underlying perfect spirituality? Where have both of them developed real love in all its utmost fruitfulness? If the true religion were to be brought forth and exhibited in any given body of men, associating together, the beauty of it, the sweetness of it, the attractions of it would be such that there would never need to be a word said about "evidences of religion."

Do you suppose that bees have an argument read to them every morning when they go out in search of flowers? It is the honey in the flowers that draws the bees; and we find them nestling everywhere in the clover in consequence of such drawing.

Do you suppose that when one is walking at evening in the vicinity of an orange-grove, he needs a guide to direct him to that grove? No; the perfume in the air is a guide-board to it. Men find it by the sweetness which increases as they come nearer to it.

Are churches fragrant? Do they exhale sweetness? Are the men who go nearest to them, and who are most conversant with them, men whose confidence cannot be shaken, that God has people on earth yet? If the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, and peace; if real compassion; if glorious generosity; if patience one with another; if bearing one another's burdens; if hiding each other's faults—if these were the traits of associated Christian brethren, do you suppose you could keep men away from them? The world

would gaze upon them with rapture. It would be like the opening of the gate of heaven on earth to hold them up before men.

On the other hand, how little has morality been inspired by the spirit of love! I look upon the vast organizations of business life, and I know that all human affairs are based on essential equity; and that truth, and honor, and honesty, and self-control, are the organic nature and interior of the great industrial avocations of human life. I know that more than anything else all industries are reciprocal benevolences, and that no industry can long maintain itself which does not confer benefit, and which is not giving an equivalent all the time. I know that the substantial reason for the various industries of life is that they confer happiness, impart strength, and build up society.

Every man who works rightly and truly, therefore, is, though he may not know it nor enjoy it, working in channels which God meant should be filled with large benevolence.

Am I covering a cottage? As, kneeling on the roof, I lay and fasten the shingles, am I not spreading a shelter for the heads of those grown people and children who shall live there? And shall I never have a thought spring up in my heart that I am spending my hours, though it may be with some pain, so as to bless the families, one after another, that shall dwell in this cottage?

Shall a man shape a cradle and never think of the babes that will lie in it? "Whose babes shall they be? What shall become of them? Will not those who first are babes in this cradle, by-and-by, having grown to man's and woman's estate, look down here on little children of their own?" Shall he not ask himself such questions as these? And shall he not say, "Let me build it strong; let me make the curves right; let me give grace to it?" The sweet little children that are to be reared in that cradle sing to him, in imagination, while he works, and the day slips pleasantly past. And when he goes home at night, he says to his helpmeet. "I have been preparing a gift for society. I know not how many will be made happier by the work which I have done to-day." He thinks of the time when the mother shall sit over the cradle, and wet it with tears shed for the child that is not. This is a minor strain of thought, but it is still musical, though his heart is sad, and he grieves for her.

If men would connect the things that they do with their uses and ends; if, instead of indulging in sordid thoughts of how much they shall get for their day's work, and how little they can put into it, and how much they can safely slight it, they felt, "Work is my way of sending out divine benevolence; it is my morality; it

is my fulfillment of the command, *Love thy fellow-man as thou lovest thyself*”—if this were the case, how would industry blossom! If men felt that they were servants of each other; if there were such an inspiration among men that they could say, “Living here, we are but one step from the home beyond; living here, we are overhung by our Father’s benefaction; living here, by faith, and hope, and love, we also live there;” if we adopted the brotherhood of man, with all our thought, and aspiration, and daily carriage, and industry, and felt, “I am serving my fellow-men, and doing all that in me lies to make the world finer, and happier, and better,” would not that be a consolation?

Lastly, while men are writing and talking of what the coming church and the coming religion are to be, I go to the scientist, and say, “What shall be the coming religion?” He lifts his glass, and sweeps it through the stellar universe, and says, “The stars answer, ‘It is not in me.’” I ask Maury, and he puts his ear to the ocean, and says, “The deep answers, ‘It is not in me.’” I ask Tyndall, and he says, “The glacier answers, ‘It is not in me,’ and the light, ‘It is not in me.’” I ask Huxley, and he asks all the beasts of the field, and all the insects of the air, and all the worms that creep on the earth, and they reply, “It is not in us.” I ask the Man of my counsel, the Guide of my youth, and it says, “The religion of the future will be the religion of the past and the religion of the present—it will be God.” And who is God? He is Love. What, then, is religion? Love—love to God, and love to each other.

Now, whatever may be the church, and whatever may be the creed and ordinances of the church, the religion of the future will be summed up in this command: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself*. That is the religion of the universe; and if you want to attain to it, begin to love, and begin to-day. To-day join with us in offering new fidelity, new homage, and new consecration, to that blessed symbol of God, the presentation of himself in the incarnate One, Jesus, our Lord and Saviour, who came to manifest the light of love, to exhibit its power, to suffer, and that unto the end.

After the blessing is pronounced, those who desire to unite with us in the communion of the Lord’s Supper will have an opportunity. All those who are conscious of their need, who feel that they have sins to be forgiven and washed away, and who are willing to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and Helper, I invite, without regard to their church connections or special beliefs, to abide with us, and partake of these emblems.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, we thank thee that thou hast made thyself known to the world in such ways that the youngest heart may be led to thee; and that by the royal road of love we find thee out and know thee as much as with human infirmity thou mayest be known in this life. We thank thee that thou art still, from age to age, inspiring love and kindness in the human heart. We pray, O God, that the day of long delay may be cut short, and that the better days of prediction may roll forward, when men shall know thee to be, not hard and cruel, but full of humane, gentle, sweet, and peace-breeding feelings. We pray that the time may come when men shall know that thou dost sit in judgment forevermore upon inhumanity and unkindness and indifference and neglect. We know that thou art a God who dost work in the royalty of mercy and beneficence, doing good that men may do good. And we thank thee that thou art calling, from time to time, many from the darkness of inhumanity and selfishness, from the thrall of pride and self-consideration, and from the up-building of themselves in power, either of understanding or of things outward. We rejoice that thou art teaching them thine inward kingdom, in which dwells righteousness, where the fruit of the Spirit is joy, and peace, and love.

We thank thee that so many are gathered into this household of faith, and that so many of them bring forth fruit fair to the eye and sweet to the taste. We thank thee that thou dost dwell among us in our households, and in the hearts of multitudes. We thank thee that thou art still gracious, a God not far off, but near at hand; a God not indifferent to the most helpless; not strict to mark our infirmities against us; but rather seeking to draw us toward thee, and to heal all our transgressions, and to wash us, and make us white as snow.

O Lord, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon thy servants who are now beginning to walk in the communion of this church, as in spirit they have long walked with us. Give them strength for each day. May they not think that they have taken upon themselves a mask which they did not wear before. May they feel that now they have reached a liberty, which they have not before enjoyed. Having been God's servants, may they feel that they are sons of God. Having served for wages, or from a sense of duty, may they serve from the inspiration of love. And may they rejoice to think that they are worthy to bear the precious name of Christ. And may it be a name of strength to them. And may they understand that it is not simply a promise of an hour, but an eternal promise to all that hear it. Gather them, blessed Saviour, in the arms of thy providence and grace; and do for them exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or think.

Have compassion, we beseech of thee, upon those who wait before thee, according to their several necessities. Hear the confessions of those who acknowledge their sins, and help them in their efforts to forsake them. We pray that thou wilt heal their consciences, and establish them in the ways of righteousness.

Grant, we pray thee, grace and blessing to all those who come this morning to make known the goodness of God; who in their hearts are thanking thee for dangers warded off, for blessings bestowed. Grant grace, mercy, and truth unto every one of them.

Will the Lord bless the little ones. Grant that parents may be taught so that they shall bring up their children in the fear and love of God. More and more may the household become a joy and a blessing to them.

We pray that thou wilt grant that all the youth in our midst, who are beginning to step forth upon the way of life, and to meet its ruder winds

* Immediately following the reception of members into the church.

unsheltered, may have strength to endure trials, to resist evil, and to establish themselves in that which is just, and true, and noble, and right, before God and among men.

We pray for all that are poor; for all that are needy; for all that are despondent; for all that are discouraged; for the sick who would fain be with us; for those who watch by them; and for the bereaved ones, who sit in the shadow. O thou God of all comfort, comfort those who need comfort. Teach them how, by the consolation with which they are consoled, to console those who need consolation. May those to whom kindness is shown learn to show kindness to others.

We pray that thou wilt bless all ranks and conditions in society. Remember the President of these United States, and all who are in authority with him. Remember the national Congress, and the several representative Houses throughout the States in this land. Bless all magistrates and all who are in authority. Grant that they may be God-fearing and incorrupt, and rule in righteousness.

May all the people learn peace and purified morality. We pray that thou wilt exalt this nation, not in things material, not in outward strength, not in physical prosperity, but in power to do good, in spiritual manhood, in purity of heart. And though thou dost scourge us; though thou dost bring us to shame for our transgressions, we pray that thou wilt grant us righteousness. And so prepare us for that great and wonderful future which thou hast predicted.

And grant, we pray thee, this day, to all thy churches, and to all thy servants that minister in them, thy sacred presence. May the truth everywhere be as bread from heaven; and may it strengthen thy people more and more. May they go forth, always, to sow the seed, that others may have bread.

And may the whole world come up in remembrance before thee. In the midst of convulsions and overturnings, may there still be the counsel and presence of God, by which the latter-day glory shall be assured. May all nations at last rest. May knowledge drive out superstition; may strength supersede weakness; may He whose right it is come and reign; and may all the earth see thy salvation.

We ask it in the adorable name of Jesus, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be praises immortal. *Amen.*

THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIAN MANHOOD IN AMERICA.

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.”—1 Cor. i. 18.

If one considers that sense of elevation, that feeling of superiority, that pride, which goes with conscious development, with refinement, literary, artistic and political; if one might stand, as Paul stood, in the midst of Athens, and look around upon the temples, and altars, and exquisite statues, and the most wonderful pictorial efforts of all artists; or facing westward, beholding the march and power of the Roman empire, and seeing the majesty and glory which there were in these things to the eyes of men; if he considered that the world was dazzled by the philosophy and art of Greece, and by the political power of Rome, then he could understand something of the difficulties under which Paul labored. The only thing which he had to go out into the world with, was the story of a crucified culprit, who was a Jew—a detestable creature in the eyes of the then civilized world; who, being a Jew, was rejected by his own people, and convicted of an infamous crime—or whose crime, whatever it was, had affixed to it the most infamous of punishments; who died upon the cross between thieves; and whose disciples were a poor beggarly band, who said that after his death he came to life again. That was all this disciple had with which to oppose the schools of Plato, Aristotle and Epicurus—all the Greek and Roman schools. The philosophy of the age, the literature of the globe, the pomp of courts, the strength of stalwart arms, the development of civilization into its various forms—these he confronted; for they were in the possession of a different religion, they were under the control of a different spirit from that which he represented. And he said, very truly, “The preaching of the *cross* is to them that perish, foolishness.” He always picked out the most

odious feature. He put emphasis on the word *crucified*. "We preach Christ crucified." He wanted to make prominent the fact that he preached One who had been ignominiously, shamefully executed on the cross. He said, substantially, "All I have to preach, is the cross, and Him that was crucified thereon; and that is foolishness to them that perish, though to us who are saved it is the power of God." Thus, also, he declared that it was by the "foolishness of preaching" that God saved men.

All through this analysis, in the first and second chapters of 1st Corinthians, Paul brings out the truth that in the preaching of this nondescript Personage, in the preaching of One who was a criminal in the eyes of the world, in the preaching of One who, so far from flaming in the imaginary glory and pomp of divinity, such as other religions represented as belonging to their Jupiters, he preached One who was broken down by human infirmity and sorrow, and who went out of life through the most ignominious gate. And he says that his preaching develops a secret power which is more than a match for every other kind of power in the world—more than a match for poetry, and more than a match for art. He declares that the preaching of this ignominious cross, and the Sufferer who died on it, are more mighty than any literature or than any philosophy—for that is what he means by the term *wisdom*. He insists that the whole visible organization of society is not to be compared to it for power. And he is not ashamed, he says elsewhere, to preach it at Rome, the very center of material power, because it develops a moral power—the real interior disposition and feelings of the true God.

The gods of the heathen, though they had some elements of truth in them, represented the basilar side of human nature. They were largely creatures of passions and physical forces like those of men.

In the fullness of time there came gradually more and more into demonstration, and into the faith of men, the view of a paternal God; and at last there came a manifestation of God in Christ Jesus. He represented the divine paternity. He took upon himself the suffering of the world, in order to save the world from suffering. He chose to suffer for the sake of communicating happiness to men. "He was made unto men," it is said in Ephesians, "*Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption*." That is, all these glorious results or qualities flow from the moral nature of this unfolded God, as one who sits, not supremely perfect and quiescent, not Chief as being the one toward whom all the good things of the universe flow triumphantly, but as being the great Laborer, the universal

Sufferer, the everlasting Redeemer of a world which, beginning at the lowest point, was struggling through pain and toil upward toward immortality and blessedness, God himself being the everlasting Father, the everlasting Teacher, the everlasting Nurse, bearing men's sins, and carrying their sorrow, in the great work of opening up the race from its lowest seminal point to its highest and most perfect development.

Therefore, to preach at that time, a crucified Saviour to a Roman or a Greek, was to preach an offense; but to those who were called, it was the power of God. That is, as soon as men's minds were really open to this new conception of God, not as a tyrannical God, not as a God of materialism, not as a God of exterior pomp and circumstance, but as a God of wonderful tenderness, and patience, and love, and capacity for suffering, and willingness to suffer, bearing the groaning world in his bosom as a mother bears a sick child in her arms, curing it by her warmth, and as a God pouring out his life into the world to quicken and ennoble it—as soon as that idea of God should become patent and universal, it would be a power against which no other power could stand for a moment. It has been so. It is so to-day. There is no power like that of the true interior unfolding of the character of God.

The whole of Paul's preaching, as he shows it here, had three elements in it. He assumes universal human sinfulness. That needs no proof. It never needed any proof. It needs it as little now as it did then. That was the first element. The second was divine love, suffering love, sacrificing love, and self-sacrificing love. Then there was immortality. I think that these are the three fundamental elements in the Gospel—universal human sinfulness, universal recovering love, and the universal immortality of men. This gives the horizon; this gives the atmosphere; this gives the great motive and efficient power; this gives the subject on which the atmosphere and the power work. Man sinful; immortality his destiny; God, the Redeemer, working out his salvation. It is a sublime drama. It is very vulgar in its details as we see it in practical life unless we are enlightened by the Gospel; but looked at understandingly, it is most sublime. Long before Science knew enough to tell about the race, the Gospel had made important disclosures concerning it, and the manifestation of God in Christ Jesus had adapted itself to the then unknown state of facts.

Christianity, therefore, is fundamental. It takes human nature at its true condition. It teaches the possibilities of development and regeneration. The great original point in Christianity is the

effectiveness with which it delivers men from evils. Habits can be broken up by it. It has power to reconstruct a man's character. A new life may be unfolded through its instrumentality, out of the histories of a very bad life. All other Religions are very poor and rapid in that direction. It teaches divine mercy, not as an alternative, not as an occasional thing, but as the very leaven of time; as the genius of the universe; as the working force of divine government. It makes the end and aim of the Gospel to be the bringing out of the race a perfect manhood. Reading the Bible would not hurt folks that live in the pulpit; so I will read a word or two on this subject:

"He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors and Teachers."

He gave all sorts of apparatus to the whole Church. What did he do it for? Why,

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of faith, and of a knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man [manhood], unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Here is a most exquisite illumination, to dark minds, as to the end which the Gospel seeks through ages, which is the development of mankind into a more noble manhood—one which shall fill men with the qualities of the divine nature itself. "The perfecting of the saints" is the perfecting of manhood among men. Nothing can so move mankind as these interior truths of God in Christ, in the direction of human nature and immortality.

It is not possible to arouse and develop the moral and intellectual nature of man, and not, as a consequence, stimulate every organization of human society. If you bring to bear upon man the full disclosure of himself as compared with an ideal that is called *the law*; if you bring to bear upon him the terrific consequences of right and wrong in this life and the life to come; if you arch over human nature with the glowing firmament of divine mercy and love, inspiring hope, and stimulating every side of human nature—if you bring to bear upon man this invisible truth, this thought-force and heart-force, then you bring to bear upon him a power which comes from no other source whatever.

Now I say that it is impossible that you should develop men to any considerable degree by this invisible truth, by this thought-force and heart-force of the universe, without affecting all their conditions external to themselves. For it is the nature of man's thought and feeling to incarnate itself. When you have a glowing thought, and you try to put it on paper, there is the incarnation,

the outward and physical form which you give to an inward part of your life.

When the artist has rising before him some conception of ideal beauty, and he puts it on canvas, there is the incarnation of his thought. When it is a machine that a man thinks of or invents, to facilitate human industry, that machine is a part of the man. It is an incarnation of his thought. Houses, warehouses, plows, harrows, ships, fabrics, pictures, statues, all things that go to make material life to-day, are but the outpourings of human thought solidified into matter. Man is pouring himself out into incarnate forms. Anything that develops in a man universal activity, fruitfulness, pungency of thought, versatility of taste, aspiration and nobleness, will not stop in that man: it will flash out of him into his surroundings. So that the moment you bring to bear upon mankind, with any considerable degree of generality, this vast interior moral stimulating influence, society outside begins to feel it. For the man, being waked up in parts, seeks to embody himself. If you wake up conscience in men, they instantly begin to correct faults and patch up laws. If you wake up the power of imagination in men, vulgarities flee from the household, and rudenesses betake themselves to bestial quarters. If you fill the souls of men with a loftier conception or a higher purpose, it at once repeats itself in new organizations, such as etiquette, manners and customs in human society. The fountain of these things is in the man himself, and he is kindled and refined and purified by the letting down upon him of the vivific influence of the heart of God, which is the source of life, and the promoter of it in all who live. If you wake up the divine fervor in a man, and bring him to a consciousness of his own power, the feeling repeats itself, and reappears in business, in laws, in institutions, in industries. The world is a reproduction of the inward states of a man.

To render the whole man vital, therefore, is to bring out his creative energy in every direction; and society is the incarnation of the thoughts and feelings and aspirations of men's souls.

Hence, he who carries to nations a true and vital Gospel, carries to them seed-forms of a universal civilization. Sometimes men have said, "If you would expend your missionary forces in teaching men a better agriculture and a better industry in shops and on ships, you would then, from that side, work up a condition on which religion could be engrafted." But what is the office of religion? What do we want when we go among men? We want to stimulate the inward life and nature of men. Then that inward stimulation will develop itself into forms of industry and civiliza-

tion. We want a motive-power first. I do not say that there cannot be auxiliary elements: there are (of that I shall treat more at length in moment); but the primary force, the grand cause of causes, is that vitality which comes from the brooding and the living of the Spirit of God in the human soul.

True religion, then, will take into consideration every human good. I do not say that all preaching produces all civilization; I do not say that all the forms which Christianity has assumed have given truth to this declaration; but I do say that the essential, intrinsic idea of Christianity is the vitalization of the human soul by the power of God's life and soul. I do say that this is the mother-head of all civilization, and that out of it will flow every conceivable excellence.

So Christianity is not simply a technical system; it is not simply a creed; it is not simply a polity; and yet, you must not suppose that I am railing at systems or creeds or polities. They are auxiliaries, but not primaries. They are secondary consequences. Christianity is a life-power, first in God and then in man. When we have vitality in the body, then we have raiment, we have a table, we have the furniture of the table, and we drink, eat, and clothe ourselves to keep up that vitality.

Christianity is vitality in the soul. First, it employs, as auxiliaries, the church and ordinances; then it employs, as methods of instruction, the Book, or preaching; but the thing itself is life-giving power. It is divine in origin, but human in development. This, being central, and being made preëminent above everything else, develops civilization, and unfolds all the auxiliaries which are required for this life.

When Christianity is developed through an inordinate ecclesiasticism, it makes me think of some children that you have seen dressed—very small babies, rolled up, and rolled up, and rolled up in such a multitude of caps and ribbons and blankets, that it took half an hour to get down to the spot where you heard some faint crying! Christianity has been swathed, and bandaged, and wound up, and covered up, for the sake, it is said, of its symbols, and sealed with stamps, and signs, and signets, till it was no bigger than a cricket; while the church was bigger than a whole castle. Christianity has been smothered in its robes.

It is not a technical system. It is not a creed nor a polity, though it has a creed and a polity; its source is the same as that from which creation sprang, and from which proceed those inspirations under which the highest instinct of the soul acts.

The difference in moral result, between civilization as a substi-

tute for Christianity, and civilization as the product and auxiliary of Christianity, will appear from this statement: that a civilization which is built up from the outside, from the human side purely, materializes; while a civilization which is the outworking of spirituality, from the divine inspiration of the human soul, tends to spiritualize, and to lift men away from the physical. In one case civilization becomes the end and aim of life; but in the other it is only its fruit and product. There can be no humanity without spirituality; and there can be no spirituality without divine inspiration. No civilization acts harmlessly, beneficently, which does not spring from that higher, that loftier nature of men, which comes only from the immediate contact of the divine Spirit.

The reason, then, why Christianity should be diffused becomes apparent. It should be diffused because it carries with it everything that is valuable to the individual man; because it carries with it everything that is stimulating and inspiring to each individual in the growth which he seeks; because it carries with it that latent nature which purifies the social relations of men; because it carries with it those influences which invariably develop into all enterprise, activity, and material improvement.

In our own case, the reasons why Christianity should be diffused upon this continent and throughout this nation are of the most pressing and urgent character. We are a people dwelling under a sky and upon a soil such as have never before been known. The enterprise, the thrift, the wealth-producing power of this nation, is something almost past one's conception. In this vast domain the constructive ingenuity of men plays upon elements which for universality and for value are beyond measure.

Ah! none can know these things from hearing a sermon or reading a book. One must travel; one must take the cars and sweep all day and all night through fields every acre of which is deep, beyond the plow's touch, with fertile soil; one must cross the prairies, and cross the great river, and cross the prairies again, and the mountains, and the plains beyond these, and so on by almost continued weeks of traveling, before he can begin to have any conception of the outstretch of the three thousand miles which lie between ocean and ocean, and which is almost one vast cultivatable field. One must thread the mountains, and count their seams; one must plunge down deep into the earth, and know its depths of gold, and resources of metal; one must fly from north to south, and from east to west, and in wide circuits all round about, to form any conception of the foundation of the vast material wealth which is laid up in the building of this continent. And one must

see how all nations are sending their young men and their capital hither, to have any adequate idea of the great developments which have taken place in our land.

Thirteen years have so changed the West that during my late visit there I hardly knew my old home. Time so changes territories and states that, on returning after an absence of a few years, one scarcely recognizes them. Where I once traveled for days in forests almost without an opening, the trees are all gone, and the fields are all open. I rode from Indianapolis, when I first came here, twenty-five years ago, on the first car that ever left that capital: to-day the whole State of Indiana is threaded with railroads, as the body is with nerves. When, thirty years ago, I went through the State of Illinois, there was not one mile of railroad in that State: to-day there are more than six thousand miles of railroad in Illinois. There are only seven counties that have not railroads, while there are over a hundred counties that have them. Such are the changes which take place within the brief section of one man's life-time. The up-springing of improvements, the out-cropping of minerals, the development of resources in this country is truly wonderful. Material wealth throughout the nation is progressing with strides of which we have no conception until we see it with our own eyes—and then we will not believe it.

Now, upon this vast industry, upon this great materializing tendency, there must come a spiritualizing, refining, sanctifying influence, or we shall become a nation of mere materialists, mere matter-workers, seeking for physical thrift and for outward comfort. The immense industries, the enormous prosperities of this nation, demand that there shall be more and more potently preached, everywhere, that Gospel which has unity: not sectarian divisions; not animosities springing from philosophical problems, handled by discordant parties, that throw them back and forth at each other as so many munitions of war; but that essential spirit of religion which unites God to man, and man to his fellows, and makes him minister and master at one and the same time of all the material products of the globe, sanctifying the world, and calling it his Father's house, he being the child and the possessor. Otherwise, men are but oxen, asses, draught-horses, and other animals of burden. Men should control the earth; and in order to do this they must be in possession of that spiritualizing life which comes only through the life that is revealed by the manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The relation of Christianity to the democratic ideas which men like to boast about, and do not like to follow, requires that every

man who loves his country should aid in the promulgation of its essential spirit. *The value of all men*, without regard to race or condition, is the essential, democratic American idea. The true democratic idea is that a "man's a man for a' that," or this, or that, or anything else. The real democratic American idea is, not that every man shall be on a level with every other man, but that every man shall be what God made him, without let or hindrance; that there shall be no prejudice against him if he be high, and that no disgrace shall attach to him if he be low; that he shall have supreme possession of what he is and what he has; that he shall have liberty to use his forces in any proper direction; that whether he be born of Caucasian, or African, or Indian parents, he shall have all the rights which God gave him. That every man shall be permitted to organize and develop, in all lawful ways, the forces which have been conferred upon him from the heaven above, or from the earth beneath, with the blessing of God, and the help of laws and institutions—that is the democratic idea. All men calling themselves democrats, think they are democrats; but they are not. There is nothing in the world harder to take, unless one is born again, than democracy; for it is essentially the seeing of God in men. It is a sense of the sacredness of men without regard to nationality, or race, or color, or condition. It is an understanding of the vitality, and dignity, in every soul which is created of God, and destined to immortality. It is an appreciation of the brotherhood of every human being for which the blood of Christ was shed. It is a higher and a nobler thing than party lines or words make it to be. This nation has been formed on essentially Christian and democratic ideas. Our fathers were not perfect men (we might know that, as we are their lineal descendants), but they were men who had drunk deep in the true spirit of Christianity. They hated oppression, though they did not quite know how to clear themselves of that which they hated in others. They came hither a true band of men, seeking to erect society upon a just foundation, and to give it a structure which should tend to carry out vital Christian principles. There never were more honest and faithful working men than these. Substantially, the laws and customs and institutions which they brought from the old country were Christian, as were also those which were added. And the modifications which were made in them, were made that they might conform more entirely to those exalted views of manhood which were breathed upon the world by the spirit of Christ. And these laws and customs and institutions, working out, and working out, have gone all over the land.

The conflict of the last fifty years has been a conflict between the essential spirit of justice and humanity, which was latent in American ideas, and the atrocious, contrary spirit which was latent in the political economy and in the servile industrial institutions of our now happily regenerated and disenthralled neighbors. Without this, we never could have had peace in this land.

I was railed at as an abolitionist; as a disturber. I did not do enough to deserve as much obloquy as I received. But still I was moved. Something was stirring me up. We were all instruments in an invisible Iland. There was an impelling Power greater than any of the actors knew.

When they dug for the Dry Dock in the Navy Yard, they struck a central spring; and the engineer said that it had better have some cement put on it to stop it up. They opened a hole and put in some cement; but the next morning the cement was gone, and the spring was boiling again. Then the engineer said there had better be some solid masonry to shut down the spring. So they built it in carefully with masonry. The spring waited until they got home, and then burst out again. Then they determined to drive piles down, and fix it. They did drive piles, and fix it; but the spring bubbled up again, just as if it did not care anything about engineers nor engineering. After they had spent some months in trying to stop the spring, they built a curb around it, and let it run. The fact was, that it had most of the east end of Long Island pushing it out, and no piles nor masonry nor cement could match the secret underground force by which it was impelled.

And there was nothing that could resist the spirit of freedom which came down from Him who resides in the heavens. The Lord, the crucified One, who wept for the poor, and died for the sinning—his was the Spirit which was at work, like that hidden spring. And when, through all this nation, by plannings, by plottings, by political masonry, by piles driven with fraud, by the cement of iniquity, by all manner of arrangements, men were attempting to defeat the spirit of Almighty God, he broke through and scattered them. And now the stream runs freely and unobstructed. It is the river of the water of life.

Out of the bosom of Christianity, out of these few essential elements of it—not necessarily out of its dogmas, whatever their service may be—come those elements which are demanded by human conditions. The essential spirit of Christianity is the compassion of God on account of man's sinfulness and need. The revelation of the essential power of love; the revelation that this power is diffusive; the revelation that it is a medicine, and not a

merciless punishment of the universe ; the revelation of a God who fills the heavens with a glory and brightness in which are truth and justice, and in which they are enforced by the vitality of divine compassion and love—such a revelation is true. The immortality of every human being, and the love and pity and compassion of God for men, is true. It is that which gives to democracy a future and a power. This is the reason why we should spread true Christianity over the continent. For, look at the vast immigration which is going on. Ship after ship, vessel after vessel, is bringing its human freight to our shores. Europe is coming over here to see us, and to stay with us ; and she is welcome. There is room enough—room enough for the good and the bad. Many of them, by ventilation, will be better than they were at home. Many of them, under better laws, will be unprovoked, and will make good men. Many will fail—no spring ever came that there were not more apple blossoms than brought forth fruit ; many will perish and go down ; but still, let them come.

Then we have our four millions of Africans. What are you going to do with them ? Are they of no value ? Oh, Democrat ! you think much of an Irishman with a vote ; and you praise him : what now do you think of the Negro ? You used to think nothing of him ; but now he has a vote. Ah ! that makes a difference. A man with a vote in his hand is a very different creature from a man that has no vote. Any human being who controls a vote has power. He has power, because with that vote he can compel the community to attend to his wants and listen to his opinions.

The Indian has no vote, and therefore has no such power : what are you going to do with him ? In other words, what is Christianity going to do with the undeveloped races on this continent ? The Lord Jesus Christ came down to save those who were lost—the poor, the mean, the criminal, the needy, the lowest. We are a Christian nation ; what is our Christianity going to do ? So far as we can make it our political interest we take care of the poor, the low, and the needy ; but the spirit of Christ is, that love is given freely, without money, without price, and without desert. It is a spirit which leads a man to give his life for the sake of others. Where are the martyrs and heroes who sink themselves in order to lift up the degraded, according to the spirit of Christ ?

“ Ah, but ! ” men say, “ we do not want the heathen on our shores. They may have some little trick of work ; but then, they are heathen, and we do not want them here. They won’t be converted. You never can mingle them with our own population.”

Well, I am astonished at these Chinese myself! They have seen so many beautiful exhibitions of Christian character, that they must be very stupid not to admire it! It must be that they are bereft of natural reason, not to be fascinated with California piety, and not to fall in love with the religion of the emigrants from the East! Why, what have we not done to convert them? We have thrashed them, and kicked them; we have hung them on trees; almost every Gospel influence has been brought to bear upon them; but the fellows will not be converted! Well, it may be that some nations are outside of mercy!

Oh! what a mockery of our democratic notions, what a mockery of our own government, what a supreme mockery of the faith which we have in Jesus Christ, is the manner in which we are treating the poorer and weaker races that come among us!

Whom does the mother first take care of in the household? Is it the great, robust boy, with curls all aflame upon his shoulders? No, it is the little crippled child, faint and feeble, wan and pale, that holds out its little hands, but cannot run. She brushes all the other children aside, and rushes to her "darling," and takes it to her bosom. And it is God in the mother that makes her do it. The spirit in her is the same as that in God, only that in God is infinite. And such being the nature of God, the lowest and the neediest are those who come first to his thought and help. And are we Christians, who put the ring on the rich man's hand, and admit him to all privilege; who honor the man that lives in the fine house; who take the prosperous to our bosom; but who say to the poor, the down-trodden, the ignorant and the vulgar, "Be as the herd," and cast them into the sea, as if they were but mire and dirt?

We need the diffusion of true Christianity to equalize the conditions of men on this continent, and enable us to meet those great responsibilities which God has rolled in upon us.

We must also have the diffusion of Christianity throughout this continent on account of the rising forces which are about to enact a vast drama in our midst. We are threatened by a golden Samson without eyes. Gigantic, corporate wealth is but just beginning its career. Whether it will shake down the temple of our government and our liberties, we know not. There must be a spirit roused up in this nation to meet wealth, which is God's almoner; which is a universal bounty; which can assist Christianity; which can lay the foundations of civilization; which, like snow, if evenly diffused over the country, is good, but is evil if it is drifted, leaving some parts bare and others heaped up. The

accumulations, the consolidations of wealth in a few hands, in the hands of vast corporations, are threatening the liberty of the individual, the integrity of the State, the purity of the court, the very existence of popular legislation; and nothing but the true spirit of religion will ever enable this nation to meet its coming struggles—for we are going to have struggles.

This morning's sermon which I am preaching is leading more and more rapidly to the contribution baskets. I am attempting to argue before you the indispensable necessity of sending out a true and pure Gospel throughout the whole length and breadth of this land, for the sake of humanity; for the sake of the household; for the sake of those great developments which are so important to us; for the sake of abating those dangers which thrall us on every side.

Why should we, then, send out the home missionaries?—for it is for the home missionaries that I am pleading to-day. I know them. My life began among them. In so large a number as that which has gone forth over the continent, there will be some chaff among the wheat, there will be some poor material among the mass; but, as a body of men, I do not believe the sun ever rose on a thousand ministers more humble, more devoted, more wise, or more sacrificing than the home missionaries who have been sent to the West on the continent of America. Why should we send them out? Because the preaching of the Gospel on missionary ground in our own land goes into neighborhoods where the population has been streaming, and where, for various reasons, the Gospel will not go with them, or cannot be supported among them. In the first place, the great bulk of people who go to the wilderness to found new villages and towns and cities, go with material ends in view. They have not much heart for the work of moral evangelization. And if they had—as some have—the work which they must do is such as renders it impossible for them to keep up with the requirements of religion and civilization. When you were born, the roads were all made. In old Litchfield, when I was born, the old house was built, the barn was built, the garden was in operation, the fences were made, the bridges, such as they were, were laid down, and the whole community was organized. That part of construction was done, and all that was required was now to superinduce the schools and churches, and to support them, which required only a comparatively small outlay.

But in these new States, the roads are to be made; and the fences are to be built. (If I could have my way, there would be no fences on the continent; they are all waste; but I suppose they are

a part of political economy!) The houses are to be built; the implements are to be bought; and the men have to earn the bread by which they live. They have such a pressure of material wants that it is almost impossible for them to do anything for the promotion of education and religion. Such is their condition that to keep the body in health and strength is the prime necessity. And then come other things in their turn. The great mass of the emigrants that go West have not the power to build schoolhouses and churches, nor the power to support teachers and ministers of the Gospel.

Now, by virtue of the fact that if one member suffers, all the members suffer; and by virtue of another fact, that the older and more prosperous should take care of the younger and less favored—by virtue of these two facts the long-settled communities should extend their sympathy and bounty to the younger States of the West. We cannot afford to have the Great Valley population material, brutal. We cannot afford to have New England ignorant and degraded. We cannot afford it in the Middle States. We cannot afford it anywhere. There is not a State in this Union that we can afford to have barbarous. If Arkansas comes up and says, "Help us to build schools," it is your interest in New York to build schools in Arkansas—if you want a selfish motive. If South Carolina says, "We have been peeled, and we want aid to rebuild our educational and Christianizing institutions," you cannot in New York afford to let her beg in vain. If a man's finger have a felon on it, I do not care if it be his little finger, it will swell and ache, and he may say as much as he pleases, "Take care of yourself, little finger; I am too busy with philosophy to take care of you;" but it will make him take care of it, first or last. There is not a single State in this great nation that is not connected, by social and moral and political ligaments, to every other State. We are all joined together, not in an absolute unity, but in a unity in which one depends upon the others for its leave to go up. The prosperity of a part depends upon the prosperity of the whole.

In pleading for home missionaries, I plead for men whose shoes' latchets I am not worthy to unloose: not for men who stood in conspicuous places, and are God's heroes; not for men who reap their renown in our day; but for men who are likely to have the highest glory in heaven. I know men whose chances of glory in the other life, I had almost said, I would give my blood to have—men unknown, poor, sick, going from house to house, preaching in schoolhouses, and in the dripping woods, summer and winter spending and being spent, for those who can neither pay them nor

thank them. Through scores of years they are building foundations which one day will bear noble structures; but they will be dead and gone, and nobody will remember that they did the hard and homely, the coarse and rude work. Nobody? Yes, God and heaven will remember it!

What we need is such men, asking for nothing but leave to die in the field. Of such men we have scores and hundreds. And for myself, I feel that there can be no service more acceptable to God, more becoming to you, and more agreeable to me, than that we should stand in the midst of our abundance, and pour liberally into the treasury of that society which is preaching in all the vast outlying States, and in all the territories clear out upon the very lip of the farther ocean, the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

While, then, in ten thousand places, to-day, they gather in twenty, fifty, a hundred men, and preach to them Christ and him crucified, shall we, in this great congregation, with our joy, with our social sympathies, with our homes that await us—shall we, in the abundance of our privileges, remember our brethren, or shall we forget them, and despise God?

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Our heavenly Father, we commend to thy care these dear children. We rejoice to believe that they are not beyond thy thought and sympathy. The least things are thine, and the mightiest. Thou art mightier as Father than any of us can be. It is not because we are human, and far away upon the earth, that we love our children: but because we are of God; it is because the spark of divine love is kindled in us. If thine affection glows in our souls, and lights our whole household benignly, what must be the glow of that infinite love which is in God when it is kindled in the whole household and realm of the Universe? We draw near to thee with confidence. As a million flowers will, ere long, rise up because the sun hath come, and will, day by day, look him in the face for light, and for liberty to be; so all that live, and are of the family of men, look up, day by day, unto thee, that in thy love and care they may have liberty of being.

We pray for these parents, that they may know how to bring up their children in virtue and godliness, so that they shall become men and women living in the service of God; in his fear and love; and in all truth and fidelity to their duties among men.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt look with compassion upon all the children that are gathered into the household belonging to this church. Will the Lord have compassion on them, and give strength and wisdom to

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

their parents and teachers, and grant that they may grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And while we clasp them in the bosom of love, while we throw the arms of affection about them, still may we feel that they are not ours absolutely, that they are of God, and that they shall go again to him, what time he shall please. And so may we love, that our love, by faith, may be transplanted, and that we may give to heaven the things which make earth the fairest. May we, without reluctance or repining, give back to God the things with which he hath most enriched us. May we live as seeing Him who is invisible. May the heavens shine clear through the opaque side of our houses, and be the inward light of our dwellings. May the faith of God in Christ Jesus enter our homes, and carry light and warmth and peace. Whether there be sorrow, or whether there be joy; whether there be defeat, or whether there be triumph, in either case, may we glory in the Lord, and give thanks unto God. We pray for thine inspiration in the household. We pray for knowledge of that life which is higher than mortal life. We pray for strength to do the things which men cannot do alone. We pray for the resting upon us of thy divine influence, by which we may advance toward true manhood in Christ Jesus, and live above the world, overcoming its temptations, and avoiding its snares. When cast down, may we be able to rise up undestroyed, and go on again.

We beseech of thee that we may have thy divine presence, not only in the household, but in all our assemblies—in our schools and classes; in the church gatherings; in the whole life of this people. May we not attempt to live by ourselves, rootless, and airless, and sunless. May we live by faith of the Son of God. May our horizon be the whole realm of immortality, and our hope the whole power of the love of God.

And so may we live, day by day, patient, laborious, expectant in hope, willing to suffer, willing to live, and willing to die. May we be in the strait which thy servant of old was in. Desiring to depart and be with Christ, which is better than life, may we be willing to live for them who dwell on earth, and need our care and services. Wilt thou be very near to all who are in thy presence this morning, and graciously administer thy presence to them according to their several necessities. For thou goest forth to every heart, and dost not regard the dwelling which it doth inhabit. Thou stoopest to the most lowly. Yea, thou abidest with the contrite and broken in heart.

Be with those who are very weak, and know their weakness, and despond, and cry out. Give them inward strength. May their souls be able, every day, to say, Give us this day our daily bread.

Be with those who are in gloom through troubles, and bereavements, and disappointments, and various overthrowings in life. We pray that, as the earthly house of this tabernacle seems perpetually to be dissolving, they may have the faith of that better house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And there more and more may they dwell with secret insight, and with holy hope and expectancy. May they cast forward this hope into the other land, as an anchor, to hold them surely and steadfastly in the rockings and swayings of this world.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all those who came up here this morning conscious of God's great goodness to them, conscious of his preserving mercy and restoring kindness, and thankful for their prosperity, for their joys at home, for their successes in their avocations, and for all that they have attained. May they now make mention in their souls of their indebtedness to thee. And wilt thou accept their thanksgivings, their offerings, and their testimony.

We pray that thou wilt be with those who, in the midst of life, are swayed hither and thither by its ten thousand currents. Hold them stead-

fast. If they have been swept out of the way, may they be brought back again, and led to pursue the things which are true and manly.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day may be found worthy of their calling. Bless, we pray thee, the young. Grant that they may begin life with noble aspirations, and that they may never yield them up. Grant, we pray thee, that thy servants who have generosity, and a sense of justice, and mercy, and truth, and fidelity, may not suffer themselves to be cast down into unfaith by the sights which they behold. Let not, we beseech of thee, the unworthy history of life that every day meets them teach them to-day infidelity and to-morrow conviction. May they be steadfast in faith, and hope, and belief in God and immortality. We pray that thou wilt raise up a generation of men nobler, and purer, and better to serve thee.

Bless, we pray thee, the poor; those whom all men frown upon, and all men hate, or neglect, or tread under foot in their weakness. We pray that more and more the spirit of mercy may be diffused throughout the lives of men, and that there may be more who, like Christ, shall go out to seek and save the lost.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bless those in our midst who have consecrated their lives to this great evangelization of men. Be with all those who teach in our Bible classes and Sunday-schools, and all who are concerned in the direction of them. We pray that the Spirit of the Lord may dwell in their midst. And grant that true fellowship, and fervent friendship, and noble aspiration, and devout consecration to the work of God among men may be found in the great band of laborers. We pray that thou wilt grant that we may not envy one another; that we may have no jealousy; that we may not seek our own praise. Grant, we pray thee, that we may join our labor to that of others who are not seeking their own honor, and who are willing to work though they shall not reap the praise thereof. May we be willing to labor in humble places, and lay foundations whose superstructure we cannot see.

We pray that thou wilt grant that all thy churches may learn more and more the things which pertain to peace and may thy ministering servants have less of the spirit of this world, and more and more of benignity and of that magnanimity which belongs to the children of God. We pray that the time may come when the disciples of the Sufferer shall not be found inflicting suffering; when the disciples of Him who laid down his life to save sinners shall cease to rail and cast stones at one another, or to hold the garments of those who do. We pray for a time of peace, and gentleness, and purity, and faith, and honor, and helpfulness, and universal love. How long, O God, shall thy church be dark? When shall it shine as a city set upon a hill? Let the day come, we beseech of thee. Let the glory of it dawn even in our time, bringing over the mountains the light of the Son of man, the glory of the new heaven and the new earth which shall flame forth in righteousness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

CRIME AND ITS REMEDY.

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.”—Ecc. viii. 11.

When crime breaks loose in a community, the natural impulse of every one is at once to burst forth, after exclamations of horror and surprise, into sentences of condemnation. Courts are blamed; the police are blamed; laws are blamed; the whole community is blamed. These interjections of indignation are signs of a sort of blind and indiscriminate moral revulsion from crime; but they are neither wise, nor intelligent even. Every one tends, in view of the augmentation of crime against life, against property and against business, to call out for more rigor, for more punishment.

This matter of dealing with a criminal class in a community is not a matter which can be settled in a moment—certainly not by a passionate outcry. It is one of the most difficult problems that come before the human mind. What a society imperfectly organized (as all human society is) can do with its morbid and criminal members, is a question involving so many elements, running so deep, having in it so much that is obscure, and in its history so much that is mistaken, that the reformation of criminal life, or the security of the community against criminal intrusion, is one of the most profound studies that can be given to the philosopher, the magistrate or the philanthropist.

The great end of punishment in human society is the protection of society itself. There is no right in human society of punishment for the sake of vengeance or pain. It is usually said that the object of punishing is the protection of society, and the reformation of the culprit; but these two are the same. Society protects itself when by punishing it deters others from crime; but society never so protects itself from criminal violence as when, by punishing, it reforms the men who are dangerous; so that in either case punishment means protection of society life.

How the punishment shall be inflicted, in what degrees, with what severity, is a matter purely of experience and expediency. The right of society to its own existence, and to all the measures which are indispensable to its existence, is unquestionable; and according to the condition in which society finds itself, if it exist in a barbarous state, it has a right to rude, and even to barbarous punishment. In a higher development, when society is carried up by moral and intellectual influences to a much higher level, it has a right to substitute modes and degrees of punishment that shall be in accordance with its new life and condition. There is no authority in the Word of God, nor out of the Word of God, that binds society to any degree or line of punishment. This is a question which inheres in society itself, and is one of its primal rights; and it is to be interpreted and applied according to the light of experience, and according to the condition of each part of society.

The prevention of crime is the duty of society, as I have said; and it is to be effected, as far as necessary, by punishment; but this duty is correlative. No society has a right to punish at one end, while it neglects to prevent crime at the other end. The obligation of society to remove the causes from which vices and crimes spring; the obligation of society so to arrange its laws and civil procedure as in the least degree to provoke outbreak, is commensurate with its right and obligation to punish wrong when it breaks out. The right of punishing should go hand in hand with the duty of prevention, though they are often ignored and almost forgotten in reasoning upon this subject.

In attempting to prevent crime, and to forestall it, experience determines that it is not severity which is effectual. It is certainty and celerity of punishment that prevents crime, if anything does. It is the certainty of suffering, and the certainty of suffering very nearly coincident with the commission of wrong, that most powerfully acts upon the minds and imaginations of men. Nature might have taught us this. Society has taught it abundantly. All those great natural laws whose penalties are gradual, and culminate far in the future, are comparatively neglected. To tell a young man who is in the constant indulgence of his passions, that he will be prematurely old, that at forty-five years of age he will have burned out the oil of his life, has very little influence upon him; but if he knows that an act committed at night will vindicate itself before morning, if he knows that penalty and wrong-doing are not a hand's breadth apart, and that the penalty is certain, then he will be strongly dissuaded from evil. And those great natural laws which are most observed, are the ones which strike the quickest and the most surely;

while those which are lingering, no matter if in the end their penalties are tremendous, are the least regarded, and the least felt.

"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil."

It is speedy trial and certain justice that are the prime factors of every rightly administered system of punishment.

That crimes against society and against human life are increasing, none can doubt. What are the reasons of it?

I think, in the first place, that we are not to leave out of the account the vast amount of ignorant emigration. This continent is the world's refuge. Hither come the best men, and hither come, too, some of the worst men, of all nations. We have to deal, not alone with our native criminals, but with the criminal populations of every age and every nation on the globe. And they concentrate in a few of our great seaboard cities. The increase of crime, therefore, in such a city as New York, is not a fair index of the increase of crime throughout the State, or at large. And the increase with us is, I think, in one direction—from the vast ignorant population which is thrown upon our hands.

Then, we are to bear in mind that the great increase of property increases the temptations for its possession. In the acquiring of property throughout society, men see the letting down of morality. They see that the truth is less and less esteemed; that honesty between man and man is less and less regarded; and that the transitions from a permissive to a forbidden wrong-getting of property is very slight and gradual. And as property is vastly increasing, its acquisition follows the law of universal nature.

If you go to a new land, and introduce an orchard, you shall find that for a series of years fruit flourishes there almost without enemies; but as orchards increase, insects begin to increase; and in old communities it is almost impossible to raise fruit; so many are its enemies.

When grain is sown in new countries, it has no foes; but when generations have passed away, it has them by the score.

When the amount of property is comparatively small, there are comparatively few that prey upon it; but as it augments, it follows the general law, and the number of its parasites increases, as also does the number of those who attack it violently. So the increase of property is always followed by a corresponding increase of its enemies, or the enemies of its security.

We are to bear in mind, also, the prevalence, in spite of all reformations, in spite of all attempts at legislation, in spite of moral suasion, of drink-insanity. The use of intoxicating liquors, I think,

has been very much abated in the community among the regulated classes; but among the unregulated classes the use of it has increased. If, therefore, you should draw a kind of equatorial line through the middle of society, I think you would find that above this line drinking has diminished, and below it has increased. And our crimes spring largely from that part of the community in which drinking habits have increased.

Now, "*good liquor*," as it is called, is bad enough, and carries in it the fire of inflammation. All that is necessary to turn a man into a fiend is contained in *good liquor*. When liquor is adulterated and poisoned, it is all the worse; and there is reason to believe that that which is drank by the great imbruted classes of men among us is not even *good liquor*—that it has, aside from its inevitable and universal mischievous effects, added qualities of mischief.

Take a foreign population, mixed up largely with native detritus, and augment the amount of property which lies within easy and natural acquisition, and inflame men with drink, and with drink which breaks down their judgment and moral sense, and all sense of decency, and we have a pretty good analysis of the causes that are acting on what are called the criminal classes.

But there is another generic cause—namely, the almost universal conviction of impunity in society. It is hardly considered dangerous any longer to be a criminal. The bulk of those who commit crime are young.

Vidocq said that in Paris nine parts out of ten of all the crime was committed by persons under twenty-five years of age. I know not what statistics would show in New York, or in America at large; but I think I am safe in saying that the vast amount of crime in our land is committed by persons under thirty years of age—that is, by that class in whom hope and impulse are predominant, rather than reflection and conscience, and from whom therefore are removed almost entirely all the elements of fear.

I mention, first, what perhaps will not carry your conviction as it does mine—the cowardice of the householder. It is a low and poor application of the great doctrine of peace (which certainly is the ideal of Christianity, and is to be reached as soon as practicable) which teaches men that they had better allow their houses to be broken open and rifled rather than send to judgment unprepared the miscreant burglar. It is an utterly false view of this doctrine which men have who think that this sense of mercy to the culprit should be stronger than the sense of one's duty to protect his property. Partly from cowardice, and partly from a badly educated view on this subject, men will not defend their premises—or there

is only here and there one that will do it. If every man felt that when he became a householder he was entrusted by the community with a fort, and was held responsible for the defence of that fort against all the enemies of society; and it was understood that whoever attempted to take it put his life in his hands, and exposed himself to just penalties; that he took upon himself the risk of blood and death, as the man does who attempts to take a man-of-war or a military fort, I think it would vastly raise the tone of conscience in the criminal classes; but if the theory prevails that a man may, with impunity, when his house is entered, lie still, and white as the sheet that covers him in bed, saying, "Take my watch, and my wife's jewels, only don't take my life, and let me not take yours"—if that theory prevails, and men play coward in their own households, it is an invitation and an encouragement to every sneak-thief and every murder-thief. No man is fit to keep house who is not fit to defend it by his right hand and arm, with anything that he can seize. Every man ought to have a sentiment of honor that shall be as vivid and intense in his own house as if he were the commander of a ship or a fort. The community would join together and cry, "Dastard" of a man in charge of a fort who should pull down his flag and retreat with his forces, when it was attacked, because he did not like to fire off his cannon, lest he might kill somebody, or do some harm; but the presumption is that nineteen out of twenty would consider themselves well off, when their premises are invaded, if by compromising they could get rid of the invader by the sacrifice of a few hundred dollars, without being killed themselves or killing him. But let there be a general presumption that he who attacks a house will lose his life, and the number of crimes by theft and robbery would be greatly diminished.

I say that it is a Christian duty for men to fortify their houses. All the houses on my street have been entered—some of them time and again. It is a shame to build houses, or to leave them, so that they can be easily entered. After mine had been once robbed, I fortified it all round. And I do not hesitate to say, that in case of an attack of this kind, I think I should live according to my preaching, in defending my house against any armed intrusion of culprits upon it.

It is impunity—impunity founded on cowardice—impunity founded on a bad interpretation of Scripture, that makes it so easy for men to rob houses and escape.

Now, while you are cursing the thief, save a little bit of the curse for yourself. There is blame at home.

Then, the chances of escape from detection are so many as to encourage men to deeds of violence and rapine.

Justice is represented with bandaged eyes, and holding the scales so that there shall be fair weight. She says nothing, and will not see anything, nor do anything but stand holding the even scales. And the officers of justice very largely think that it is their duty to have their eyes bandaged, so that they need not see any more than they can help. The consequence is that when scores and scores of men commit crime, there is no vigilance to detect them; there is no one to watch and bring them to justice. Even when officers might see, they often think it discreet to look the other way. Thus negligence on the part of conservators of peace works toward the universal impression that there is impunity in crime.

Then, when men are arrested, there are a great many chances of their escape—first by compromise with the police. I honor a good policeman. I believe, usually, that each policeman is honest; but generally there is much to be said on the other side. That there are connivances before arrest and connivances afterwards by unworthy members of this most honorable and useful body, none can doubt who are at all acquainted with the literature of our courts, or with practice in them. A great many conservators of peace in the community think it to be their duty to compromise in this matter. So there is the compounding of villainies, and they are helped by property owners. Men, for instance, from whom has been stolen fifty thousand dollars worth of bonds, feel that if they can recover forty thousand dollars worth, and lose the ten, and let the thief go, they will be fortunate. Therefore large amounts of property are stolen in order that a large premium may be received for returning them. There is so much of this sort of thing going on that it creates a great sense of impunity—if men are only dexterous enough and large enough in their operations. Thus the compounding of villainies by policemen and property owners is another cause for a belief in impunity on the part of the criminal classes.

Then there are to be added the chances of escape from conviction when men have been detected, and brought into court, and arraigned. In the first place, there is an amount of political influence brought to bear upon our courts which is fatal. Largely, the criminal judges in New York have felt the whole force of candidateship. I think there has not been a step so directly back toward barbarism as that by which criminal judges are elected by the people. There never will be a pure judiciary till we go back to the custom of our fathers in this regard. Now the judge on the bench knows that his election for the ensuing term will depend upon the

way in which he carries himself during his present term. Here are men who have been guilty of thieving, of burglary, of all manner of violations of the law, but he knows that his re-election is in their hands; and it is not in human nature, as it has been committed to judges in these days, not to be influenced by such considerations.

But aside from that, voters and workers are valuable to parties in wards and districts; and prominent politicians interfere in behalf of criminals, to wrest them from the hands of the law, and to shield them from every legitimate effort which is made to bring them to justice. So, in the working of things, our very political institutions are destroyed, as well as all certainty of conviction in courts; and thus impunity is given to those crimes which knock from under society its sills and foundation-stones.

That is not all: there is a vast pecuniary influence brought to bear against the administration of justice in our courts. Frequently, men who are unknown in influence or politics, and who are without friends, are tripped up in a moment, and the laws expiate themselves fully. Quickly roll around the wheels of justice. Promptly the judge pronounces sentence, and the criminal is "sent up." A little useful reputation is in that way given to him who conducts the court. But if a criminal has friends, and possesses large means, and is of great importance in elections, money rains about our courts in abundance. Thousands, tens of thousands, I suppose I may say hundreds of thousands of dollars are brought to bear to stop or to pervert the impartial administration of justice. And all these things are known, felt, and calculated upon by the criminal classes.

I cannot discuss, though I must allude to, what I regard to be the very lax ethics of the honorable profession of the law itself. It is held that every man has a right to defense; and I hold that it is every man's right to have the best aspect put upon his case which learned counsel can put upon it. In a general sense this is correct. I do not propose to go into a minute examination of it. I merely say this: that the extent to which this supposed right and duty has been carried has almost made a mockery of courts and of justice. I do not see how one can reconcile it with his conscience or with sentiments of manhood and of honor, to carry out the part of a counsel to such a degree as has notoriously been done in many of our courts, in favor of the criminal classes. If there be such latitude permitted; if men of genius and learning may continuously, not under circumstances of mistake or misconception, but almost methodically, almost by organization, pervert law by ingenuities and ten thousand hair-splitting exceptions, so that the

decisions of the courts shall be at variance with the average moral sentiment of the whole community, then they are the patrons of criminals, as well as the defenders of them, in each particular instance. I will not undertake to say how far the perverse influence of counsel has been carried; but it must be reckoned as one among the many causes which produce in the community the large sense which prevails of impunity in crime.

Now what is the remedy for this state of things?

Of course, that which lies back of everything else is education, coupled with religion—education in religion—religious education. It behooves the community to raise up a generation of better men. And when I say that the community ought to prevent crime, I mean not merely that it ought to have schools in which to educate men, but that every community ought to apply to its population all those great sanitary laws which have been shown to have moral consequences. If narrow, unventilated, ill-lighted, filthy streets, or boarding houses, are found to be nests of crime, fostering it, propagating it, then by the law of self-defense, the State has a right to expunge them. Scatter the population, and cleanse the thoroughfares. Whatever law of health stands connected with morality should be enforced. It is the business of the Legislature and of the Executive to prevent crime by the application of its great natural laws. It is in vain to open schools and churches where there exist those pestiferous haunts of depravity which will surely, in spite of education and religion, carry men wrong. Both things must be done: all those conditions out of which experience teaches us that right-minded men come, should be secured by the State, in so far as the interference of the State is necessary; and gradually it should build up those institutions which tend to develop intelligence and virtue and true religion.

There ought, also, to be a discarding of brutal punishment, such as hanging. I do not say we have no right to take away the life of a man. I have no scruple on this subject. That is not it. I do not say that the death penalty ought never to be inflicted.

When an army is before the enemy, and a crime is committed which threatens the discipline of the whole army, and its safety, punishment is properly inflicted at once, and on the spot. The criminal is shot down summarily.

When the Israelites were in the wilderness, and a man committed a crime against person or property, which jeopardized the safety of the community, they could not shut him up, they had not the conveniences for it in the desert, they could not guard him, they could not do anything with him except to dispose of him.

and they disposed of him in the best way they could : they stoned him to death. And, by the way, those who are so fierce in urging the argument of Scripture on the question of hanging, ought to remember that if they adhere to the text of the Bible they must not hang men until they have stoned them. And if they are burned, they must be stoned first. If men are so fond of following literally the authority of the Old Testament, then they should change hanging to stoning, in order to be consistent throughout.

Now, in unsettled forms of government, where the best thing is to put a man out of the way by taking his life from him, it is perfectly right to do it; but as society becomes stationary, and develops in its resources, and is able to punish its criminals in other ways than by taking their lives, I hold it to be wrong to take life. It is better to restrain a man's liberty, than to take his life away from him, where the condition of society is such as to admit of it.

In the first place, I hold that taking away life does not produce a moral impression. It once did. When society was in a low and barbarous condition, there was nothing, perhaps, which seemed to men more a punishment than the premature termination of life; but that is not the impression which prevails now in the community. I think that executions work in the other direction. They do not deter from crime. They rather lead toward it. We have, or can have, institutions by which a man may be deprived of the public use of his life, and may be confined where he will not be without service to the State, and where he will be a living example before evil-doers. A man who has been forty years in a penitentiary for taking the life of a fellow-man, is a better moral example than one who, in an hour, is disposed of, and forgotten utterly.

If you have no means of keeping and teaching and reforming a man who has committed a murder, you are justified in taking his life, where it is necessary in order to defend society; but only under such circumstances. In the present state of things among us, the employment of capital punishment by hanging, as it is in vogue, or promises soon to be, is going back toward barbarism.

The existence of capital punishment renders it almost impossible to convict men who ought to be convicted. It exercises such a perverting influence on court and jury, as to cause men to look upon crime as a thing that may be committed with comparative impunity. It is not severity that deters men from crime, but celerity and certainty of punishment. A small penalty that is sure and quick, will do more to restrain men from the commission of crime, than the thunder of a judgment day with all the apparatus of

omnipotence, flaming in the far future. It is not the things which lie beyond the horizon but the things which lie this side and close to men, that influence them. As long, therefore, as men are publicly executed upon the gallows, I think juries will stretch law and feeling to the utmost, and give impunity to crime and to criminals.

Men scoff at us, and say, "What wishy-washy humanity that is which bestows such generosity and sympathy upon criminals, and does not think of the victims, nor the wives and children of the victims; which cries over the culprit, and forgets those whom he has injured!" I do not propose to cry over any culprit; I do not propose to bestow generosity or sympathy on criminals; but I mean to uphold that which I think will best take care of society; and I say that hanging will not do this half so well as imprisonment. And I say, further, that humanity to criminals is a more sure means of taking care of society than inhumanity or barbarism would be. I hold that when a man becomes a criminal, nothing is so bad as a breaking out toward him of the belluine passions of other men. It is thought that when a man becomes a criminal, he stands in the line of brute beasts, and has forfeited his rights. It is not so. If I have slain a hundred men, I have my rights—the right of justice and the right of humanity—the rights which God and nature give to me. I have not the right of personal liberty of action, and a thousand civil rights; but no man can divest himself, or be divested, of the fact that he is a child of God, and that he is one of those for whom Christ died. Though he be steeped in crime, and in the fumes of perdition, yet there is that in him which every human soul ought to look upon with compassion. It does not follow that we shall pardon him, or that we shall not punish him; but if we punish him, we are to punish him as a man, and not as a beast. We are to go to his punishment with humanity and generosity, as a father goes to the punishment of his son. He does not spare him, but he chastises him as a father, and not as an executioner.

When, therefore, our punishments are ameliorated, convictions will multiply. A hundred men on juries would bring in a verdict of guilty if they knew that simply the liberty of the criminal would be taken from him in prison, where one would bring in such a verdict if it were known that the fatal cord would end the criminal's life. It is not necessary to go into the details of all the arguments, *pro* and *con*, of this matter.

The pardoning power, also, in the community, has been a source of wide-spread conviction of the impunity of crime. I hold that it

would be impossible to carry on our penal institutions, if there were not the pardoning power of the Executive. There are men who think that when the courts have condemned a man to the gallows, the Governor has no business to interfere with their decision; but I hold that the pardoning power in his hands is a safety-valve for every prison in the State. While at Auburn there are eight or nine hundred prisoners, and at Sing Sing six or eight hundred, and at the penitentiary several hundred more, do you suppose these prisoners could be kept in subordination if there were not some hope of release held out to them? They are human beings, and are to be treated, as those outside of prison walls are treated, by reason, by conscience, and by moral sense.

I learned in Auburn, that a man had been sent there from one county, for horse-stealing, for only one-half of the time that another man, from an adjoining county, had been sent there for the same offense. They came together, and knew each other's history. And it is natural that the man whose term is the longer should say, "Now, if I am sent here for ten years for stealing a horse, and that man for stealing a horse is sent here for only five years, one or the other of us has been cheated or favored." Every judicial circuit has its sentences varying according to the temper of the judge, according to the moral atmosphere, and according to a number of other circumstances quite independent of absolute equity; and when you herd together hundreds of men with such unequal punishments, you breed a sense of injustice and wrong. The pardoning power is the valve for the escape of indignation on the part of these men. It gives them opportunity for hope that these discrepant sentences will be, in some degree, evened up in the end.

But it does not seem to me that the pardoning power should remain in the hands of the Executive. For his sake, and for the sake of the community, there should be a Council of Mercy from whom pardons should proceed. The Governor should not have imposed on him the pain and the suffering of being obliged, time and again, time and again, time and again, to be the final factor of death. The responsibility ought to be distributed in a council, so that there should be impersonality. The pardoning power itself should remain; but the indiscreet use of it has produced impunity in the commission of crime. The feeling, "We shall not be found out; or, if we are found out, we shall not be arrested; or, if we are arrested, we shall not be convicted; or, if we are convicted, there is a chance that, by going from court to court, we can worry out justice, and so escape condemnation; or, if we are condemned, there is a chance that we may be pardoned"—this feeling gives

impunity to crime. The track of criminality is surrounded by so many processes which give hope to the criminal, that there is prevalent a great and widespread feeling of impunity.

The way to obtain relief in this matter, is, as I have said, to make punishment quick and certain. And it must be administered in mercy—in a humane spirit. Justice must not be represented any more by the bear and lion: it must be represented by the angel that is in men. And when the administration of justice is merciful as well as strict; when it is sure and prompt, but administered in a spirit of mercy, I think crime will be very far diminished throughout the whole community.

I must mention, also, another thing that seems to me to stand intimately connected with the dangers of the community: I mean the introduction of criminal news into our literature—not only into our novels, but into our daily food.

Have you taken notice of what has gone on during the past two years with respect to that one man, Foster? For two years, we have been fed on him. Every week or two our daily journals, under the pretence of fulfilling their duty in keeping their readers apprised of the news, have given us large installments of this man's life. Now, what made him worthy of such canonization? What was there in him that he should have a place in the journals of the day which no philanthropist, no studious *savant*, no benefactor, no man obedient to the law, has had? Let a man become an atrocious criminal, and under this pretence of giving news, our daily journals set forth his life continuously; and during the past two years enough has been published about Foster in the newspapers of the city of New York to make an encyclopedia. This man, for no other reason than that he was a criminal, has been advanced to a conspicuity and publicity which may not have been very gratifying to him, perhaps, but which cannot but have had an injurious effect upon the moral sense of the whole community.

I do not believe that it is possible for the unshaped young minds of the community to become conversant with the news of crime, in all its forms, and not be injured by it. You will not let men read bad books, because you say that bad books tend to excite unhealthy emotions. Familiarity with vice takes away sensibility to vice. And yet, gulf-streams, vast currents, of criminal news, sweep through your houses every day. What would you think if a man were to open a common sewer, and run out of the street through your back yard all the feculent matter of society? Would it conduce to health, comfort and convenience? And yet, to what an extent is the feculent news of the day run through your houses

every morning and every evening in the newspapers! Can it be wholesome? Can it be wise? Can it be justifiable? The custom is almost universal, and it is justified from various considerations which I shall not discuss at the present time; but I wish to express my feeling that the publication of criminal news in such vastness and variety, and with such immense circulation, among people, young, ignorant, and out of the way, is morally injurious to the community, tending to produce the looseness out of which other crimes and other violations of the law will grow.

So much it has seemed to me wise to say, this morning, as an improvement of the facts which have so agitated the community during the week past. There are one or two questions which I wish to propose to you, and with which I shall close this sermon.

First, let me ask, Have you expressed or felt a sense of indignation at the prevalence of crime in the community? Have you condemned the courts, the judges, the officers of the law? Have you vehemently inveighed against criminals? If so, what have you done to prevent crime? What, in your place as a citizen and as a man, have you done to reform criminals? When education has been declared to be a prevention of crime, has it had your sympathy or co-operation? When it is understood that, in the last analysis, the fertile source of crime is the intoxicating habits of the community; that the drinking of alcoholic liquors is the cause of perhaps ninety per cent. of the criminal actions of men, have you done anything about it? Have you been in favor of temperance, and sought to promote it, either by local societies, or by laws that in some way should restrain this widespread and perilous mischief?

There have been various debates as to how far law should be resorted to, and how far moral suasion should be relied upon, to restrain intemperance. I say, have a law as quick as you can. I would not have a law put in force prematurely; but the right to one is unquestioned.

What have you done to prevent crime? Have you any thought or care about it? Do you think you have a right to sit by and see the seeds of it sown, and the causes of it multiplied around you? Can you fulfill your duty on this subject by "Ohs" and "Ahs," and "The gallows are good enough for him," when crime breaks out? Are you not a factor in society? Is it not the sacred duty of every man who has the protection of the law and the benefit of society, to contribute to society and to the commonwealth? Have you a right to ride in the State as a traveler rides in a car, never saying "Good-bye" when he goes out of it? Do you think that when you have paid your taxes grudgingly, you have paid your

whole debt? No State can be wholesome, no State can live long in power and virtue, except as the great body of its citizens feel an interest in the welfare of the commonwealth. And it is my duty to say to you, as Christian men, as householders, and as neighbors, that in everything which comes within your reach, it is a part of your duty to the ignorant, to those that have been badly taught and brought up, and to those that are badly organized, to so participate in the administration of daily life, as to bring in the light of intelligence, and purge away temptation, and secure peace, by increasing the celerity of justice, and the certainty of punishment for crime, and so build up in the community a noble virtue from the top to the bottom.

One thing more: If that which our Master said be true in our time (and who can doubt it?) there is many a man that goes a criminal out of life, whose chances are better than those of many a man who stands in virtuous connections in society. Remember the old time in Jerusalem, when the priests and high priests and rulers of the temple were there in the grandeur of their estate, when over them was thrown the imperial shield of Rome, when the Pharisees walked with unsullied garments, and would not even touch the poor, and the ignorant, and when our Master, pointing to those who were the most detestable criminals in the eyes of the Jews—the tax-gatherer and the courtesan—said to the religious class, the refined, the cultured, the educated, “The publican and the harlot shall enter the kingdom of God before you.” The inhumanity of men who are lifted above temptation towards men who suffer from having fallen under temptation; the separation of a man from his kind by reason of the superior advantages which have been granted him—these things are treason against Heaven. And although passionate brutalities and crimes are not less guilty than men think, the arrogance of moral sense and intellect are ten thousand times more criminal than anybody thinks; and we are to beware in the proportion in which we are fortunate, that we cleanse our skirts from all condemnation in crimes and vices of every kind, by more self-denying work, by more sympathy with the poor and needy, and by strengthening the foundations of society in truth and purity and justice.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE know not the ways in which our thoughts ascend to thee, our Father. We are not wise in things spiritual. We know but little of that which is open to our sense, and less of that which is discerned by spiritual intuition. As we draw near to thee, our knowledge becomes less and less; but our faith, that works by love, grows stronger and stronger. By all the sense of our sinfulness, by all the feeling of our weakness, and by all our yearnings for something better, intangible, and indistinct, and by all the uprisings of our hearts' affection breathed by thee into us, we clasp thee as the God of love, and rest in thee. Where thou art, is life, and light, and summer. Where thou art, is repose, and protection, and everlasting abundance. Where thou art, we shall be, and that will suffice. We shall be satisfied.

This is our hope.

We cannot understand, either, the way of thy providence, nor the way of thy grace. Every day the clue fails us. Every day our study, our thought of thy government finds fatal impediments. But above and over all chasms, through all waste places, trackless though they be, there is that in us which needs thee, and calls after thee, and rises toward thee. And as hunger means food, so these yearnings mean thee. As the child cries in the night for the unseen mother, so our hearts cry out for God. Our need of thee will not be satisfied without thee. We rejoice that there is answer, though not such answer as man makes to man. Thou knowest how to breathe thy spirit upon the heart in a calmness and sweetness which the world cannot give nor take away. Thou comest to the soul as the summer comes to the earth; and as it strangely wonders at finding itself dressed so gorgeously, so we, at times, in hope, in love, in ecstasy, and even in a peace that passeth all understanding, marvel where we all were so clothed.

And now, O Lord our God, we pray that thou wilt manifest thyself to those who, for want of thee, are weak, are stumbling every day. We beseech of thee that thou wilt manifest thyself to those who are falling day by day because they are discouraged, and can hardly hold on to the way of righteousness, and are tempted incessantly to say, What does it avail that we try to follow after God? Why shall we not eat and drink, and to-morrow die? We pray that thou wilt manifest thyself to all who are fainting in the way under temptation or under trial, that they may know that things are better than they seem. Touch their eyes, as thou didst his of old, that they may behold the heavens filled with the chariots of God, and with the angels of God, striving in their behalf. Though thou art hidden, it is only from our body, from our senses. Grant, we pray thee, such a revelation of faith, that all those who need thee may have the consciousness that thou art thinking of them, that the way of grace is toward them, and that all help shall be given to the helpless who put their trust in thee.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy presence to those who are in trouble, whatever that trouble may be—whether it be of self-accusation, or of bereavements of affection, or of hopes disappointed. Whether they be suffering in body, in mind, or in estate, may they find thee a present help in time of trouble. Oh! how companionable hast thou made thyself, Master, in times of trouble! How often have we found thee breaking bread at our table, when the sun hath gone down, and the evening or the night hath come, saying, Peace be unto thee! How often have we found thee, not upon Mount Zion, but on Calvary, where sorrow, and tears, and blood were! How often have we found thee, not in the glory and thunder of thy power, but in thy leniency and mercy!

Grant, we pray thee, that those who are in trouble may come to the

Sufferer, who, though now he is exalted above all human infliction, never forgets the man that suffers; who, remembering his own suffering on earth, knows human suffering with perfect knowledge.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to all those who are sick; to all those who have temptations by reason of bodily ailments; to all those who are waging the battle of life feebly, because they have little strength, so that their power fails them. Have compassion upon them, thou lenient God. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, that we are but dust. And so may they have borne in upon them a tender sense of the faithfulness of an all-remembering God.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon those who are careworn, and who are bearing the burdens of every-day life. Sanctify to them their tasks. Grant that they may be made, not only stronger, but wiser, by the things which harass them.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant that those parents whose thoughts in the household are anxious regarding their children, and who long to see them grow up to honor, and strength, and truth, and manhood, and Christian nobleness, may have the presence and the hope of Jesus. Shine in upon them, we beseech of thee, with the light of thy promises. And we pray that they may be able to cast their burdens upon the Lord. May we not only look upon our children as given of God, but every day may we so give them back to him that they shall come again to us each day as God's gift, so that on their raiment there shall be no smell of earthly fields, but the odor of heaven.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to those who are wandering; to those who are in doubt; to those who look for something better in religion; to those who, though they are confronted by the imperfections of thine earthly people, inwardly cannot forsake nor let go the truth of God as it has been manifested through the ages to our fathers and holy men. Have compassion upon those who go wistfully round about, not knowing where to rest. Grant that at last they may be found by the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and brought into the great church of divine love, and mercy, and purity, and truth, and equity.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the poor outcast; upon the uninstructed; upon those on whom there is no bond of father or mother, and no restraint of home; upon whom beat all the harsh winds of temptation; and who are driven hither and thither, or founder and go down in the storm, no man caring for their souls. We pray for the neglected; for those who are in jails and prisons; for those who are in hospitals or asylums; for all the great under-class; for the dregs of human life. Thou hast taught us not to call anything common or unclean; and we would look upon the faces that are distorted with the most frightful passions, and feel that for them there is thought of mercy with God. For them Christ died; and their need is in proportion to their weakness.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt be with those who are seeking to purify the ways of life; with those who are endeavoring to reform the morals of men; with those who go forth for the establishment of truth, and justice, and temperance. And we pray that thy power may be felt in all our churches, and in all our communities, that we may have wiser and purer legislators; that we may have more unselfish, more incorrupt, magistrates; that there may be more justice in public affairs; that there may be more mercy in private matters; and that our whole land may be cleansed by the Holy Ghost.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt raise up the poor and the ignorant. May school-houses spread sacred light everywhere. May all seminaries, and

colleges, and universities, and places of learning, from day to day, be under thy benign smiles. And we pray that thou wilt disseminate the truth. Whatever it may overturn, let the truth shine.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt, throughout all the nations of the earth, bring forth thy counsels, and by knowledge drive away ignorance, and superstition, and all forms of oppression, and deceit, and wickedness. May the day of cleansing come, and all the earth at last stand in newness of life—in the new heaven and the new earth in which dwells righteousness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word spoken this morning. Grant that it may excite thoughtfulness in us. May it lead us to wise resolutions, and to wise action. We pray for the commonwealth. We pray for its despised and neglected ones. We pray that some instrumentality may be found by which to save men from being ground in the slime and soil of pollution. Lift up the light of thy countenance, and so strengthen the things that are strong, and wise, and good, that they shall carry remedy to the things that are poor, and needy, and destroyable. We pray for all who are in prisons. We pray for their repentance and reformation. We pray that they may be restored to industry and happiness. We pray that men may have sympathy which shall extend to them again a chance to be honest men. We pray for those in prisons who are appointed unto death. We beseech of thee that thou wilt have compassion upon them, and upon all who are intimately concerned with them. Remember our State and our land. Remember all the nations of the earth, and the whole fellowship of mankind. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

REASON IN RELIGION.

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even these who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”—Heb. v. 12-14.

This is a chiding. It is a chiding for want of intelligence. It is a reproach for an indolent use, or rather for the disuse, of reason in the province of duty. The sacred Scripture stands almost alone as a book of religious directions in exhorting to a full, free and constant use of the reason. From beginning to end, it takes for granted that man is a reasonable creature, to be dealt with by motives intelligently presented. Men are best dealt with by an appeal to their reasoning faculties; and in consequence, the Word of God is constructed substantially upon that plan. It addresses the reason primarily. It challenges men to examine the different commands by the light of reason. Some have thought that the question of the apostle, “Who art thou that repliest against God?” was a dissuasion from meddling with the human understanding in things divine. If it be, it stands solitary in the Word of God. “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.” Throughout the Old and New Testaments there are inducements and persuasions of every kind to the examination of God’s commands; and it is declared that they are reasonable; that they are right, just, true, good. Everywhere throughout the Word of God are provocatives to the fullest and largest use of our understanding in judging of things fit or unfit, right or wrong, true or false. So that it may be said that the Word of God is constructed upon the very principle of exciting men to the use of their reasoning faculties.

On the other hand, dullness, and stupidity, and indifference, and that simplicity which indicates want of culture and ignorance, are

made criminal. Men are reproached, blamed, for them. And one of the effects which may be expected from the soul's being touched by the Divine Spirit is that it will mount up into a higher realm of intelligence. In no instance that I remember is there a command which should lead men to lean on others for their knowledge. Certainly, there is nothing like a servile acceptance of imposed conclusions recommended in the Word of God.

Nor is it anywhere authoritatively hinted at, or clearly stated, that God has reposed his truths in the keeping of any body of men from whom their fellow-men are to receive them implicitly and unthinkingly. Not even from himself are we to take, unchallenged and unexamined, the truths which are fundamental to our character and our lives; and still less are we commanded to take them at the hands of the Church, or of any priestly body whatever.

In so far as reason is concerned, the Word of God is a grand encourager of the supreme use of the understanding of men, both in things secular and in things spiritual and divine. So far from our reason being limited by authority in any arbitrary body, it is made to be the duty of each individual to think, to judge, to choose, to be vital. Not that men should do it without help; not that men who are combined for the pursuit of truth are to be treated with disrespect; not that there are not many presumptions that men who betake themselves to any line of thought will be more likely to be right than those who do not; but whatever help we may gain from precedent, from authority, from men of any profession, it is the duty of every individual man to weigh, to judge, "to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good."

The Word of God is an enlightener; and wherever it has been a free Bible, wherever it has been generally read, and wherever its influence has really entered into the lives and hearts of men, there intelligence has prevailed, and there the human understanding has unfolded its best works, and developed its best efforts. So that the Word of God is not a tyrant book. It imposes no manacles and no restraints, except those which belong to the nature of the human mind, and the nature of the subjects which the human mind is called to investigate.

When, therefore, the hierarchical churches cast disesteem upon the human reason, and reproach those who lean to their own understanding, as if the declarations of the Old Testament were to have literal application, they depart from the genius and the spirit of the Word of God. And yet, the Protestant spirit is liable to go to the other extreme. The reason is not infallible any more than the Pope or the Church. Men have cast down the hierarchies, and re-

fused to accept them, questioning their edicts. Men have denied the right of any class to think for them. They have gone almost to the extent of idolizing the reason. There are a great many kinds of idols in the world: there are those that are made of sticks, and stones, and clay, and precious metals; and then there are churches that are idols; and there are creeds that are made to be idols; and there is such a thing as idolizing the Bible itself—which is the idol of many and many a Protestant; and the reason is the idol of still others. In many instances, the Roman tendency, and the modern free-thinking tendency, stand at the opposite extremes—both of them alike in error; for the human reason is neither so acute, nor so comprehensive, nor so sure in its deductions as men think. It is not any safer in many instances, and in some not so safe, as an authority, as custom or experience. In ten thousand ways men are obliged to do that which they scoff at and scorn the hierarchy for doing or enjoining. Do I do all the thinking which leads to the things that I believe in? I believe in the whole system of mathematics, whether abstract or applied; but have I thought it all out? I never have, and thank God I never shall! It is not for me to think out the great system of astronomy in order to believe the astronomical truths of my time. I accept them at the hands of the Church of Astronomers. It is not for me to go through all the earth and explore geographical facts, in order to believe them. I accept them at the hands of the professional explorers. I trust them for the truth of these things. It is not for me to unbed the customs which stud society all over, and run back to its real facts, in order to believe in its philosophy. It is enough for me to know the average experience of society, upon which these customs are based. I take them as they have been handed down to me. It is not for me to undertake to traverse or analyze the reasons of art. I take from artists the great canons of truth in that department, because I believe that they have found them out. I trust to their authority in such matters. And when you come to look into affairs in general, there is no man who is not constantly pinning his faith on the sleeve of some other men for knowledge—and that in the very sphere to which his avocation confines him. Everybody, in some directions is doing that which we abuse the Roman Catholic for doing in religion; he is not so far wrong after all, in spots. The grocer in many parts of his business acts on hearsay. He goes according to other men's judgments and thinkings. The Surgeon and the Physician are perpetually doing it. The Lawyer lives upon precedents. The Astronomer is always receiving truths from others. He gives them more or less examination; and yet, in the main, he

takes them on trust. There is no sphere of human life in which a man stands where he is not the centre of innumerable rays of light which come in upon him; and he takes them without analysis. It is not in the power of a man to give independent and personal investigation to them all, so as to know them of himself.

If, therefore, to follow out every line of truth with one's own individual reasonings and deductions were a necessity of intelligent conviction, men could believe but a few things. It is not in our power in this life to master many subjects. There is only time enough for one to think about a limited number. It transcends the power of men to cover much ground by investigation in this world.

So, then, there are both of these principles at work. It is indispensably necessary that men should think, and that they should think for themselves. It is necessary, in repeated instances, that they should make their own deductions and conclusions, and follow in the lines of conduct which flow from them. But on the other hand, men cannot, in all things, think for themselves. It is right, it is wise, it is reasonable, to accept the thoughts of others. We give and take. In one place a man thinks for you, and in another place you think for him. There is this interchange of knowledge on the great principle of the faith of man in man. We trust each other's thinkings. And yet there is, over all this faith and trust, an investigating tendency; a thoughtfulness; a right to stop every conclusion, and question it, and oblige it to show its passport and prove its origin.

Both of these tendencies are at work. We teach men; but they are left independent and free to think. Other men teach us; but we are independent and free to think. In certain lines, we take the results of each other's thinkings; but not without the right of questioning them.

When, therefore, men insist upon it that to be in the full exercise of reason one must throw off the past, and lift up his head into an independent sphere, where no man before has been, and think out all things, to him may be applied the words of the proverb:

"Sest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him."

Not philosophy, but folly inheres there.

Let us look a little, then, at the elements and the proofs of that reason which men talk so much about, and know so little of.

First and lowest, is that which we possess with the whole range of the lower animals—perceptive reason—that part of the human

understanding which takes cognizance of physical facts and events that are exterior to ourselves; which perceives the existence of things, and their various qualities; which recognizes whatever belongs to the framework or physical structure of the globe.

There is evidence that we possess this phase of reason in connection with the lower creation. In many respects they have sharper senses than we have. The eagle and the vulture can see a thousand-fold more accurately and distantly than we can. The hound has a sense of smell which interprets things to him as no sense of smell ever interprets things to men. There is a sense of touch possessed by many animals which is finer and more authoritative than any sense of touch which is committed to us. But no animal has an average so high, and of so many senses, extending over such a large radius of the physical world as man.

Where the results of observation are brought together in certain affiliations, we have what we call the realm of sensuous, physical science, which is dependent mainly on the quality of perceiving.

Now, if any man supposes that there is certainty in this realm, he has given very little consideration to it. Men say, "Do you not believe the sight of your own eyes"? I have nothing better, I admit, by which to see things. A man's hearing is the best thing he has for that side of truth which is taken in through the ear. His sense of smell, his sense of taste, and his sense of touch—they are the best instruments which he has for perceiving particular phases of truth. But are these instruments so perfect that men may rely upon them implicitly? No. Every court of justice shows that the same event, being looked at by two, by four, by six different men, is not, although they are honest, and mean to state the truth, seen by any two of them alike. The sense of seeing in each one acts imperfectly, and each sees differently from the others, and makes a different report from theirs. Men think that they see things with absolute accuracy; but experience has taught the scientist that one observation is not enough—that a score of observations are necessary in order to correct the fallibility of the sense of seeing.

The same is true of the sense of hearing. Men do not hear half that there is going on, to begin with. Let the leader of a choir or a band hear a semi-tone of discord, and his ear will detect it instantly. Mine does not. The great rush of sound I hear; I take in certain great effects that are produced; but all that fine analysis by which the ear, under suitable training, detects the slightest shade or element—that I am deficient in. That belongs only to the musician, and comes only by education.

Hearing is not very accurate as between one man and another. In some it is far better than in others. It is not very accurate as between one period of a man's life and another. Different statements are given where men listen carefully and report truly what they have heard.

The same is true in respect to the sense of touch. The five senses, with the perceptive intellect back of them, are alike in this respect. The sense of color, the sense of shape, the sense of quality, all the senses, when you apply the test to them, and measure their accuracy, are found to be very unreliable. Nothing is more inaccurate than the reports of a man's perceptive intellect. And yet, with what arrogance do men speak of it! It answers the common purposes of society; but not without falling into innumerable errors which need to be corrected.

When a young physiologist came with great zeal to Cuvier, and said that he had discovered a new muscle in the frog, the old naturalist waived him off kindly, and said, "Come to me again in ten years." He never came. Farther investigation proved to him that he had not found a new muscle.

Every school of natural history, every school of physics, in the broadest domain, knows perfectly well that the senses need to be trained, and that there are very few men whose knowledge of the senses can be relied upon. The genius of knowing even the lowest form of truth is a rare genius; and in respect to the great mass of men the senses are fallible. Though they answer a certain rough use of life, and afford a basis for general confidence, yet, after all, when the question is one of exactitude, there is nothing less to be trusted than the senses, until they have been trained. And there are not many men who are capable of being trained so that their senses shall be irreproachable.

This is one of the grounds and signs of the skepticism of science. Men who are scientific investigators apply to truth the tests of physical investigation. They perceive the mistakes which are made by others and themselves, and they come to have a realizing sense, as the old ministers used to say, of the fallibility of man's perceptive reason. When they hear a man reasoning from the Bible, and forming judgments and drawing deductions therefrom, they hold these judgments and deductions in suspicion, and say, "That man is not using his understanding accurately." If you go still higher, to the reflective reason, it is that which recognizes the relations of things to the relations of truths. All truths are in their abstract forms subjective. They belong to you. They spring out of your inner consciousness. All things are mainly external to you; but

the reflective reason recognizes the results of matter in its own sphere, and also the results of states of mind, and of all that belongs to human consciousness and human faculty and human power. Ordinarily we call the use of this reason *philosophy*. Where it exists in certain forms, and considers everything in the most abstract way, we call it *metaphysics*.

Now, when we look at the reliableness of this superior reason, has it proved to be a safe ground for trust? For I know not how many hundreds and thousands of years men have been heaping up system after system; and the chief object of each succeeding philosophy or theory has been to show that the one which preceded it was false in the higher realm of the philosophical intellect. Men have been for ages reasoning, drilling, training, accumulating; and after all, the consciousness of mankind is that the reflective reason, while it has vast advantages, while it supplies a human want and a human necessity, is as far from being infallible as anything can be. No man can afford to lean his whole weight upon it without suspicion, without test, without trial. It partakes of the fallibility of human nature.

Nor does it follow, because a great many different minds, in different directions, come together on a truth, that it is more true than it would otherwise be. Whole generations have believed together, and a new generation has, by new methods of investigation, upset their belief. There have been times when the whole drift of the world was in certain directions; and they were always followed by new developments; and speedily the current turned right round and flowed the other way—showing that while men individually have been fallible in their reflective reason, they have likewise been so collectively. The thinking of masses of men in a given direction does not necessarily authenticate any truth. The fact that things have been accepted from the days of the patriarchs may create a presumption or probability that they are true, but it is not absolute evidence of their truth; for many things have been believed from the days of the patriarchs that have proved not to be true, and been taken out of the category of truths.

When, then, you come to judge of the action of the understandings of men—their perceptive reason and their reflective reason—you will find that though they have practical serviceableness, they are so crude, so untrained, and so disturbed by the emotions of the mind, that they are not infallible, nor absolute, nor to be depended upon.

There is another sphere of the reason—that one in which truths are apprehended in their social and moral relations. We come into

the knowledge of truths of fact and matter by the mediation of our senses; but there is a higher realm than that of fact and matter. There is an invisible realm where emotion, where sentiment, where spirituality reside. We come into communion with that realm by the understanding, through the mediation of our personal emotions and feelings. I will illustrate it.

I do not suppose that to a butterfly there is any thought of beauty; but it is itself beautiful. I think that there is not in the animal creation—except possibly in a few of the more highly organized animals—any considerable sense of beauty. But the heaven is beautiful, and the earth is beautiful.

There are a great many men who, in this respect, are like the animal kingdom—men of strong reasoning power; men of sharp observing power; men of great power of creativeness; men who know how to turn ideas into things, and yet apparently have no sense of that subtle element which pervades the atmosphere, which influences human conduct, and which is, as it would seem, a letting down of one of the greatest attributes of God on earth—the sense of things beautiful. Man does not perceive this. What is the matter?

Take a little air, or strain, which an organist may give you. It shall be some familiar tune, like Dundee, or some old carol. Let him, by-and-by, after playing it on one or two small stops, introduce another stop—a hautbois or a wood-flute, for instance; and you will see that while the air remains, there is a new quality in it. Let him introduce another stop, and another; and you will see that it is still the same melody and harmony, but that something additional has gone into it; that it is richer, sweeter, stronger. We have not language to follow these subtle things very far.

Now, it is so with the human mind. The intellect is looking at things; and if all the emotions were shut off, and were not allowed to color them, how barren, how unrich they would be! But you draw one emotion, and instantly the things perceived through the intellect are affected by that emotion. As in playing a tune, every additional stop that is introduced adds a new quality to the sound, so the understanding is modified, changed, enriched, by this or that emotion which is let on.

When the intellect is thus electrified, magnetized, polarized, it comes to a recognition of the greater truths of affection and sentiment. For instance, a man who is absolutely without love for children or pets will sit in a nursery where children are playing, without any sort of feeling; but put me where those children are, and I am asparkle all over, because I love children. The moment

my perceptive reason and my reflective reason are shot through with the magnetism of this emotion of love for children, I become competent to perceive thoughts and feelings and relations which I never could have perceived by any ordinary process of thinking. It is the thinking power, waked up and acting through the color of an emotion, that brings one into relation to the truths which belong to that emotion.

Take a man who has no conscience naturally (it would not be difficult to find such men!), and let him stand in the midst of actions and presentations, whatever they are, and he will perceive no sense of equity; he will have no fine appreciation of honor, no intense feeling of what is right or wrong; he will be entirely without any such emotion; but others, standing right by him, and highly constituted in their moral nature, will be sensible to what is right, and true, and noble, and just. In other words, where emotion is absent from a man, his understanding cannot know or comprehend certain feelings which belong to emotion; but where emotion is present in a man, it unites with his understanding, and enables him to take in these feelings. The feeling of conscience joining itself to the reason, to the understanding, enables it to perceive those things which belong to the realm of conscience. The understanding is always the knowing part; but what it knows depends on what it has before it, or behind it, or within it.

Take the emotion of ideality, which we call imagination, fancy, aspiration, yearning, and what not. Where that joins itself to the understanding, it makes the orator, the poet, the mystic, the dreamer. It makes men that see truths in regions where they do not outwardly appear. In all such cases the understanding is magnetized by that feeling which brings them in relation to things invisible—to superior truths. Throughout the world, the sentiment of benevolence, the sentiment of hope, the sentiment of faith, the sentiment of conscience, the sentiment of love, bring us into relation to spheres of truth which are infinite, divine, transcendent.

When, then, you come to look at what are called moral intuitions in men, what are they but results of such a highly organized, sensitive state of mind, that feeling, flashing upon the understanding, brings into the form of knowledge or perception all the truths that belong to the emotion which has colored, or magnetized, or polarized the understanding?

Now, in this realm, what style and degree of certainty is there? I think, generally speaking, it may be said that those intuitions which are against nature—using *nature* in a qualified sense—are

more apt to be true than those which are with nature. In other words, the spontaneous feelings which a man has in the direction of the animal sphere—anger, pride, cruelty, and the like—are, generally speaking, more erroneous than those intuitions which go out toward the generous, the noble, the pure, the self-denying. It is more natural for a man to act with those immense swells of feeling which work toward the animal, than to act with those emotions which work toward the spiritual; and yet, in that direction he most often acts wrongly. It is only by long practice with reason and feeling that we have learned to discern the right from the wrong—the good from the bad. It requires education—that is to say, the introduction of the element of habit upon this joint action of the reason and the emotions—to enable us to make just moral distinctions. Men require the sharpening of drill before they can discern what is high; what is right; what is symmetrical; what is beautiful—before they can discern any of those noble qualities which belong to them, and which are implied in the terms *civilization* and *spirituality*. These are all reached through an imperfect medium. Emotion and reason, working together on a higher plane, are transcendently valuable; but they are far from being infallible. They are full of faults and mistakes.

So far, then, as to the fallibility of men's reason.

It would seem, at first thought, in looking over this subject, as though there was a strong argument in favor of having the Church think for men, and tell them what is right and what is wrong; but there is always this fallacy: that where the Church thinks out a truth, and tells it to me, I have to think of it before I can understand it. I meet the same liabilities to error in accepting from the Church what it says as infallible, that I do in the exercise of my own thought independent of the Church. The very act of receiving truths from other persons or from bodies of persons, is attended with as many risks as the act of searching for truths unaided by others. I am liable in accepting what comes to me from others, to no less limitations and mistakes than I would be if I went forth and gathered my own materials and made my own deductions.

Moreover, we have had the experience of ages, which shows us that the truths which are handed down to us by corporate bodies are not any more true than those which are developed by our own individual experiences.

Take the household. The father and the mother can think for the children until they are fifteen, or eighteen, or twenty years of age; but then they must think for themselves. Why? Because no child is like its father and mother. All truth is relative to the

person by whom it is applied. Every man has his specialty which renders it impossible for him to take the shape, the color, the proportions, the exact elements of discrimination, which belong to the mind of any other person. No two persons ever agree. No two persons ever see alike, or hear alike, or feel alike, or think alike.

I have a kaleidoscope at home (just now that is the plaything), and in turning it round probably five hundred times, and causing thousands of combinations, I have never seen two combinations in it that were alike. There are just so many (twenty or thirty) pieces of glass in it; and the sphere is very small in which they they work; and yet, the combinations are never repeated, are never reproduced. I do not know as they would be if I were to turn the kaleidoscope five hundred years. Although there are only twenty or thirty of these bits of glass, there is always some little difference in the combinations which they form, and which report themselves to the eye.

If that be so in respect to twenty or thirty little bits of glass, which maintain their own individual forms, and can only change in their relative positions, what a kaleidoscope the human mind must be, that has thirty or forty feelings, which are never the same, which are always changing in quality and intensity, and each of which forms endless combinations with the others! A vast, voluminous, intricate, changing thing, in its outworking, would the human mind seem to us to be if we had an eye of divinity by which we could give form to all the thoughts and feelings of men as they flow out. No two men think like each other; and no man thinks like himself in any two consecutive moments.

When, therefore, bodies of men attempt to impose their views on their fellow-men, they act contrary to the nature of the mind, and contrary to the experience of mankind. Views so imposed cannot be helpful or profitable. No wise man will ever reject or neglect the results which have been arrived at by any other wise man, or any body of wise men; he will always look with great respect, and with a recognition of the presumption of their truth, on things which have come down through long periods, and which have approved themselves to generations of men; but no certainty attaches to them. We cannot afford to take them as absolute. There is nothing infallible but God; and he is hid.

When, therefore, it is proposed that this limitation, this fallibility, of the human mind shall be remedied by some authoritative tribunal, that tribunal itself is subject to all the liabilities to error which the individual is who accepts its dictum.

Then next, let me speak of the arrogance of those who are

throwing aside, or attempting to disesteem, or to disown, all the deductions of the spiritual sense; all the results of the action of the upper understanding. Look at the scientific tendency by which men would bring everything down to the sphere of the perceptive reason. There are many honorable exceptions. I do not say that it is the tendency of the professors themselves to overvalue the accuracy of scientific investigation. The fallibility of the lower forms of physical reason, or of that which tends to physics, should teach men the fallibility, also, of the higher faculties of mankind.

When, therefore, men disown morality, or its foundation, sociology, or its great elemental foundation, spirituality, with all its experiences, on the ground that they do not come within the purview and investigatory power of the lower reason, it seems to me that they act in the most incomprehensibly unphilosophic manner. Shall I disown the sounds that fill the air, because, applying my eye to them, I cannot see them? Shall I disown all odors, because, putting my ear to the flower, I cannot smell them? Shall men disown truths, because they cannot taste them, when they are discoverable only through the joint action of passion or affection or spiritual emotion, and the higher understanding? Shall men apply the crucible, or the mathematical rule, or any outward measure, to things that, if perceived at all, must be perceived through the channel of higher thoughts and feelings, and disown them because they cannot stand the test of the lower reason? The lower reason has its tests, the superior unspiritualized reason has its tests, and the spiritualized reason has its tests; and each must rest on its own ground.

It is arrogance, then, even if it be maintained in silence, to suppose that all the great truths of spiritual Christianity are to be rejected, or held in doubt, because they refuse to submit themselves to the test of scientific reason. There is a higher realm than that in which the senses bear sway; and the lower court cannot control the higher. The justice of the peace may appeal up to the judge, but the judge never appeals down to the justice. And the higher reason is unjudged by the lower, though it judges the lower.

One other point. In view of the carefulness required in the investigation of truth; in view of the time and training and discipline that are required; in view of the nature of the mind, and the skill required to judge of its actions rightly, I say to all those who are speaking lightly of the faith of their fathers, and of the manners and customs of their childhood; I say to all those who, without any special knowledge, are talking of progress and emancipation, and of the glorious era of reason; I say to all those

who are curveting in physical philosophy, as against the higher modes of arriving at the truth, "You are going too fast and too far. No man is wise who leaves his head behind him; and you are traveling faster than your brain can go."

To bring new thoughts to the balancing of truth; to put thoughts to thoughts, and to make them march in ranks and train together to form systematic facts and co-operating truths—this is a slow, a cautious, and a difficult process. Not one in a hundred can reach the higher forms of truth without having been schooled. You would not think of judging of painting without having studied the art. You would not think of judging of the operations in an astronomical observatory without having thoroughly investigated those operations. And yet, men take the old Bible, and sling it behind them, and say, "This may have been good enough for my father and mother, but it will not answer my purpose. I am going to read scientific facts. I am going to find out what is true in other directions. I am not going to be held down by those superstitions, those old women's fables, those fantastic notions. I am going to be emancipated from everything of that sort." If you come to that result by the action of your nobler nature in its best condition, I admit that it is legitimate; but if, when you have scarcely been born into the light; if, while you are raw and untrained; if, with no more thought on the subject than you can give to it in walking from your house to the ferry; if, without seeking for knowledge as a hid treasure; if, without scales, or measures, or alembics, inside, or outside, or anywhere, you rush into those themes which embrace infinity and eternity, which cover the whole destiny of man, which relate to the condition of States, the foundations of households, and the economy of industrial life—everything that concerns us here and hereafter—and undertake to settle all these matters by scientific generalizations, you are a fool—with my compliments! And how many persons you will find who do these very things! How many there are who refuse to go to church, as their fathers did! How many say, Let those who will take their grandmother's spectacles and read that old Book; but as for me, I have been born the forerunner of a new sphere, and of new times!"

You must equilibrate in this matter; you must take things that men believed in the past; you must trust the conclusions of men who have gone before you; but you may carefully think, and conscientiously reason to test the ultimate truth of those convictions. You cannot rise to a high and honorable place in business life, or civil life, or political life, except by those stepping-stones

which were squared and laid down by the industry of those who have preceded you. Knowledge, virtue, morality, spirituality, manhood, can only be acquired by long effort and practice.

Men gradually find new elements of truth, or larger proportions of old truths. Be willing to receive new light; but until you have something substantial and clear as crystal to take the place of the old, hold on to what you already have. Nothing is so bad as for a man to be afloat. Nothing is so bad as for a man to lose faith in everything.

Put in a skiff, in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, a babe that knows neither the stars, nor the sea, nor storms, nor sail, nor compass, nor rudder, and what such a child is, that is the young man who drifts through life, contemning all faith, all knowledge of the past, yet without having acquired any knowledge of the present, or gained any intuitions of the future.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope for a fool than of him."

Prove all things; but, as a condition of doing it, and after you have done it, hold fast to that which is good.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE are not afraid to draw near to Thee, O thou Holy One. We are not afraid of thy justice, nor of thy wrath. For, though we know that thine hand is against evil, we know that thy heart is toward the children of men, even in their degraded condition. It is thy will that they shall be drawn up by the power of thine intelligence, and of thy holiness, and of thy goodness, until they shall see thee as thou art, and feel thy presence, and be transformed into thine image. We are far from thee, but thou hast pushed us away, that our journey may be toward thee. Though we are unlike thee; though thou art not of a form like ours; though thou art not bound to the clay as we are, yet, inwardly, we believe that thou hast given us the beginnings of divine thought and feeling, and that thou wilt shape us into the image of thyself. We draw near to thee this morning, knowing our weakness, our want, our ignorance, and our transgression, in that limited sphere where we know what is right and what is wrong. We draw near to obtain thy help; to experience thy compassion; to be warmed by thy love; to be formed by thy power, which works perpetually in the hearts of those who will.

Enter, O Divine Spirit, into our souls, with light, and warmth, and life, and love, and joy; and may we be able, this morning, in entertaining thee, to cast out all rivals; to lay aside everything which offends thee. Speak to us as thou didst of old to thy disciples, Peace be with you; and may all turbulent passions, and all sensuous appetites, and all unsatisfied and wearisome longings, and all burdensome doubts, and all trying memories, and all blinding clouds, and all things which disturb the calm of our settled peace, depart from thy presence; and may we dwell with thee, this morning, in that restfulness and in that childlike confidence which shall make us supremely happy in the Lord.

We desire, O Lord, to confess thy great goodness, and our unworthiness of it. We look back to the way in which we have been led to admire thee, and upon the rod and the chastisement which have been laid upon us; and we see that they have been blessings; and we commit ourselves again unknowing, but confiding, to that hand which hath guided us thus far. All that we have we commit to thee. Thou art sovereign. Thy thoughts never forsake the earth, but are always abroad. Evermore the Watchman, thou art, of Israel, that slumberest not nor sleepest. Thou hast all power, and thou hast all goodness. We commit ourselves to thy thought, and thy purpose, and thy power, and desire to find peace in the perfect submission of ourselves to thee.

We pray that thou wilt deliver us, in the various spheres in which our life is cast, from untruthfulness; from unfaith; from temptations which are stronger than our resisting power. Deliver us from all evil, and give to us, day by day, such intimations of thy presence and of thy complacency as shall fill our horizon with light, that we may call ourselves the children of light—the sons of God.

We pray that thou wilt bless all who are in thy presence according as thou seest that they need in their special wants and in their personal necessities. Be to every one a present help. Grant abundantly outward blessings to those who have inward strength; and grant inward strength to those who are surrounded by outward tokens of thy goodness. Be to all that which they need; not that which they plead for in their ignorance, but that which thou, in thy wisdom, seest to be best for them.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are laboring in their respective spheres to build up the kingdom of God in this world and in the great world beyond. Oh, may they be wise! May

they themselves be enlightened. May they not be weary in well-doing, for in due season they shall reap if they faint not.

Bless our Sabbath-schools, and all that teach and all that are taught in them. We pray that the army of children that are growing up in our midst may grow up better men than we have been; with a larger thought of the work of God in this world; and with a better and earlier consecration thereto.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all those who go forth to-day on missions of mercy to the imprisoned, to the sick, and to the wandering. May they go in the spirit of the Master; and may they find that it is not in vain that they carry out the merciful dispensations of the Gospel among their fellow-men.

We pray for the reformation of those who are given to vice and to crime. We pray for more virtue and wisdom in our laws and in our institutions. Wilt thou increase, we pray thee, the restoring power of thy truth in the midst of men. We pray that thou wilt bless all who teach in every sphere of learning. Remember all those who are teaching in our common schools; all those who are teaching in obscure and destitute places; and all those who, with pains and self-denial, devote themselves to the good of the young.

We pray for schools for those who but lately were in bondage and darkness; for schools in far distant settlements where ignorance prevails.

May all seminaries of learning come up in remembrance before thee, and be greatly blessed of God.

We pray that thy kingdom may come, and that thy will may be done throughout the whole world. Unite the nations together in a common desire for peace. May that love of blood and of segregation, and may that spirit of avarice and of combativeness, which have desolated the world so long, at last be restrained; and may the spirit of intelligence, and of humanity, and of love come in the place of these disastrous evils. We pray that thy Church may everywhere spread, and purify the nations of the earth. May the day speedily come when, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, men shall know and love the Lord.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word which has been spoken. May it excite in us thoughtfulness and caution. May it produce virtue in every one of us, restraining the arrogance of our pride, and stimulating the dullness of our understanding. May we be more and more curious of the things which thou hast hid on every side to tempt our knowledge. May we study to know thy truth. So may we grow in grace, that we may grow in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We ask it in his adored name. And to him, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be the praise, evermore. *Amen.*

THE DISCIPLINE OF TROUBLE.

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”—Heb. xii. 11.

In his immortal discourse on trouble, the apostle sums up, in this passage, the benefit of trouble—and with a double or mixed metaphor or figure. Where a mixed figure is the result of poverty and ignorance, rhetoric despises it; but where it is the fruit of richness and culture, literature allows it and praises it. When, therefore, we find the apostle speaking of men being “rooted and grounded in love,” that they “may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height,” thus mixing the orchard and architecture together, we see there were so many images in his mind as he rushed on to the expression of his feeling, that we like it in spite of the inharmony.

So here, there is a mixed figure. It is the gymnasium and the garden that are mixed. Or, rather, one might say that it was the military ground and the orchard. “No trouble, no affliction, no chastening is for the present joyous, but grievous,” saith the apostle: “but afterward it worketh the peaceable fruit of righteousness.” It is as if he had said, “Trouble is like the orchard. When the blossom drops, the fruit, beginning to swell, is bitter and sour; but if you let it hang on the tree all summer long, the juice turns to sugar, and has a fragrant, aromatic flavor. That which was in the beginning sour, becomes very sweet and very delicious. And troubles, if you let them hang long enough, and let them have sun enough, are peaceable, acceptable fruits.”

But then the apostle adds, “in them that are exercised thereby”—in those that are drilled, disciplined, put through all their paces and evolutions. For the verb is one that brings to view the training of athletes in a gymnasium for the duties of a soldier, or for

athletic purposes. When he brings in this second figure we can but smile to think of the apostle's meaning that apples and figs and peaches were drilled, disciplined, put through their paces and evolutions. But it is a good figure. The two parts of it work very well together if critics will let them alone, and if persons will accept them in the spirit in which they were given.

I propose, this morning, to use the latter figure, and to regard the discipline of trouble in this world as a soldierly training, as an athletic discipline, by which men are subdued to unity and harmony with themselves and their circumstances. I have at times employed the other figure, and shown that troubles develop as fruits do, and as grain does. The general truth, whichever figure or whatever figure you employ, is this: that the things which men most dread, resist and avoid; the things which, when they befall men, they attempt to throw off, as if the dispensation of trouble were a pest to be got away from—that these things are tokens of God's fidelity; that they are his drill sergeants; that they are his schoolmasters; that they convey to us not simply lessons, but practice, evolutions, and final results which stand intimately connected with our manhood, and so with our capacity for enjoyment; and our rank and station hereafter, when we pass to the world of a true manhood.

Happiness in this world lies in the harmonization of a man's nature. Perfect happiness is the harmonization of a man's nature around about some central, dominant moral element. The grand element of love—the regnant one—is that. If every part of a man's nature were absolutely coincident with it, were in analogy and harmony with it, men would find themselves in a mood or disposition in which there could scarcely be any suffering that could be called suffering. At any rate, whether they might suffer in extreme cases or not, they would be in that condition out of which would flow continuous joy from the harmony of all the faculties. If men were harmonious around about some of their social instincts or feelings, so that every part of their mind, when the mood was on, was perfectly in subjection to this central, intermediate point of harmony, then life would be happy, although it would be on a lower plane, and in a less ravishing form, than if the point of harmony were higher.

Farther than that, if a man's life is perfectly harmonized around about a passion or an appetite, then there will be a great outcome of enjoyment, such as it is—coarse, basilar, animal, sensuous, and sometimes devilish: nevertheless it is enjoyment. If a man's life is not harmonized around about anything, then he is open to all those fluctuations and incertitudes out of which come discontent,

and trouble, and vehement sorrows. If a man wishes to be a bad man, and yet be happy, he would be wise to compel all the intellectual elements, all the moral elements, and all the social elements of his being to serve a basilar point which has been selected by him, around about which harmony is to be established. If he will make a king out of some vulgar impulse, some belluine passion, then the harmony of his nature requires that everything shall be subject to that elected king. Although it will be lurid in its character, although the life which it produces will be evil in its tendency, and although it will forfeit the future, yet in so far as the present is concerned, it will be happy.

A divided kingdom is an unhappy one; but a harmonized kingdom, even if it be the lower part of the mind that has the throne, and compels submission from the rest of the mind, is a happy one: not in so far as character is concerned, nor in so far as hope and expectation of the future are concerned; but in so far as personal happiness is concerned. No man can be happy who is at discord with himself all the time. No matter where you take your concert pitch, everything must be keyed to that point, whether it be low or middle or high.

This harmonization—this power to secure unity in every part—is very rarely facile. I suppose there are persons who inherit in the line of their ancestry an accumulating tendency toward unity and harmony in themselves. Men speak of all mankind as being sinful—as being at discord with themselves. This indicates a want of observation, and a want of knowledge. The promise is, that those who serve God shall transmit to posterity their tendencies; that moral qualities shall be thorough-bred in their children; that their children shall stand in a line of ancestry which shall bring them into this life, not perfect, but inheriting the fruit of the struggles of those who have gone before them, so that they shall possess qualities which shall render them educable far higher up on the scale than they otherwise would be. Some men are born, as it were, close by the kingdom of God.

It is not for me now to discuss what the special obligations and duties of men are; but I wish to impress upon you the fact that the process of harmonization is one which does not necessarily result through efforts and struggles of those in whom it exists, but that it may be the result of the efforts and struggles of scores or hundreds of years antecedent to the time in which they lived. But the cases are very few where this harmonization is found—though there are such cases. It is rare to find such a harmonization of a man's nature that he is adapted inwardly, and in all his parts, to all his

external surroundings, and to all his outward circumstances. In the main it is a process which is learned. We come to it by drill. The pressure to which we are subjected in life, the rude dealings of nature, of society, of those things which in the providence of God are brought to bear upon men for their education—these things are all of them so many pain-producing experiences; because they are straightening the crooked arm, as it were, that was badly set, and are relaxing the tenseness of the muscle, so to speak, which has been corrugated and hardened by disease. No man whose leg is broken has it set without pain. No man whose joint is out escapes pain when it is put in. To go from that which is lower to that which is higher; to go from a morbid state to a healthy state; to go from an imperfect condition to a more perfect condition, always carries labor-pains with it—or healing pains, which are about the same thing. It carries suffering with it.

Men often think that suffering is punishment. When they come into trouble, they say, "What have I done that God should punish me?" As if this were the supreme idea of providential grace! As if this were an honorable interpretation of the great constitution which belongs to all time, and to the race! As if suffering were necessarily punishment! Sometimes it is; but for the most part, in this world, it is not. It is said that suffering is the penalty for the violation of law. Yes, *Penalty*, but not *Punishment*. Law violated, acts back, as it were, upon men in the form of suffering; but suffering is not necessarily a sign of disfavor. It is the hint to a man that he is out of the way; but there is nothing ignoble in it. Because I am not born with a knowledge of law, I am not to blame. It is not my fault that I was a baby before I was a man. It is not my fault that I had to learn to walk, that my starch-like bones had to acquire strength in walking, and that I had to learn by stumbling. God chastises men, but not in anger. And when he is building them up; when, having sprung from the earth, they are getting rid of its dust; when they are working from lower to higher conditions; when there are a thousand things that they do not know, that have not been revealed to them, and they are set, without implements, to perform great tasks in a world like this, it is a shame to say that the troubles which come upon them are mainly punishments.

In this noble chapter, the apostle himself, whoever he is, disdains that view, and says that pain and suffering are a part of the constitution of life. This is the banner that is unrolled from the great cloud which has brooded on the earth.

"Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

That is a part of the constitution by which men are lifted from a lower to a higher sphere; from imperfection toward perfection.

The string that has been out of tune, low down, upon which the key is placed, comes groaning and sighing up to its concord; and are the sighing and groaning a sign of disgrace and penalty in the string? It must come into tune with the other strings, and the groaning and sighing are simply caused by the process of bringing about that result.

Now troubles and weaknesses are, as it were, prophets' eyes looking for strength; and the drift or intent of trouble and sorrow in the world is up-building, plentitude, reparation, restoration, and final glorification.

There are indispensable lessons of manhood which we have not by nature, which we cannot gain by volition, and which do not come by reasoning, but which may be eduved in us by sorrow and suffering. For we are to consider, in looking upon the estate of man in this world, that he is, as it were, shipwrecked upon this globe—thrown up by birth. As sailors, or other poor, miserable, ignorant creatures, are, by the storm, vomited upon the rock, or on some desert shore; so the race of men are cast up and strewn over the surface of the globe; and all that is hidden in the stellar universe is nothing to them; all that is hidden in the earth keeps its secrets from them; and all that there is in the majesty of law has no revelation for them. Everything, as it were, is kept silent, and men come into life knowing nothing, either of thought, or of feeling, or of skill, or of opportunity, or of conduct. Men have to learn everything, and learn it under untoward conditions. They have to learn it from froward teachers, in rude ways. And while learning they know nothing about the learner. Who has opened the knowledge of what man is in his structure? How many thousands of years did men walk on the earth before they knew that there was any such thing as the circulation of the blood? Who knew, until within the memory of a single man, almost, the nature of a nerve, on which so much of comfort and happiness depends? Who knew anything of the bones and muscles? Where was the inventory of these things? Were men sent into life with a charter before them? Was there sent for their enlightenment a knowledge of their relations to nature? Not a word of it. Was there given to them an idea of what they were to do with their faculties in order to educate them and harmonize them? Not a word of it. The heaven was silent, and the earth was a sealed book. Men were rolled in bundles of power, but without a charter, without an interpretation, without explanation, without any means of knowing

what they were, who they were, or what they were to do. And to this hour we are trying to find an outline of what is the true unfolding of the whole of man's interior; of what is the economy of mind; of what is the relative place of the powers and passions; of how each one ought to be handled; of how they are to be brought into concord with each other; of how man is, when built up with outward things, to come into harmony with external circumstances. What a vast vacuity of knowledge there is!

And during all this period of study and research, how are men being tossed about and tried in various ways, as the result of their ignorance? If men knew what was the law of bone and muscle and nerve; if they knew how much to eat and how much to drink; if they knew how to regulate their habits so as to preserve their health, how much they might escape! If a man knew what his nature and temperament was; if he knew what was the pressure of blood per square inch upon his brain; if he knew how to harmonize his affections with his sentiments, and his sentiments with his intellectual states, and his intellectual states with his moral impulses, how much simplified the work of his life would be! But there is this vast realm where generations of men come in at one end and go out at the other, coming in darkness and disappearing in darkness; and the great mystery of life is, how to make manhood out of the elements which surround us. And what teaching is there in regard to this? What minute instruction is afforded us? What psychological or scientific accuracy has yet been attained? Where can you find anything of this kind to which men can turn with confidence?

Now, under such circumstances, no man can tell what he wants; and if there is not a super-eminent Being, a God of love and mercy who does know, and who is, by his divine providence, using all these elements so that men, in their ignorance, shall apply to themselves that which is needed to push them onward and upward, and to develop and augment them; if there is not a providence ruling over us for our good, then we must be in a most pitiable condition.

I cannot think with composure nor with toleration of the view which some men take of this matter. I cannot conceive of any cruelty so exquisite as it would be to bring into existence a globe like this, with such possibilities hidden and uninterpreted, and to put upon it a race like this, with such gigantic possibilities all unexplained, and to set them a-marching in such an endless succession of rounds, untaught, unhelped, born of sorrow, never out of sight of tears, dying in sadness, and going to destruction. I cannot look upon such a thing with allowance. It is simply a horrible phan-

tasm; and my soul is released from the burden of it only by those glowing interpretations of the goodness of God which break out, here and there, all through the Scriptures, saying that in our ignorance, in our low estate, there is a providence of grace which is adapting the circumstances of this world to our want, and is doing for us that which we need to have done, but which we do not know how to do for ourselves; and that this is the mystery of that great realm of pain, and disappointment, and bereavement, and anguish in which we are acting, but which we cannot interpret except in this general way of supposing that it is administered by the hand of a loving God, epitomized and manifested to us in the example and sayings of Jesus Christ our Lord. When I think of being under the administration of such a spirit, then my blindness, my unknowingness, and my inharmonious proportions I submit to him willingly; and I say, "If I am being educated here, if all these experiences are laying the stones that are to build that manhood which I cannot see, and if, by-and-by, when the scaffolding falls, there shall rise up a fair temple of God, thus invisibly built, though I cannot see my Teacher, nor understand the process by which the result is attained, I am satisfied." And when I see him and am like him, I shall experience a satisfaction such as this world cannot know.

Let us look at it in this point of view: that, in the care of a loving God, administered by a providence of grace, there is a conflict going on perpetually by which men are by their troubles disciplined—"exercised thereby," as it is said. For example, it is very necessary that men should learn two seemingly incompatible things. No man in this world can thrive and build himself up who does not love the world, its industries, its enterprise, and its attainments. In building outside of ourselves, we build inside, too. We learn the simple virtues, the economic necessities, by industrial life. We learn heavenly life by our intercourse with one another—by our patience and forbearance and generosity in household life. And yet, while we are so clasping the things of this life, it is necessary that we should be strangers and pilgrims. We are to be citizens; and yet we should be as those who dwell in tents. We are to build; and yet we are to be as if we were houseless. We are to accumulate; and yet we are to be as if we were in poverty. We are in every way to take root; and yet we are to be rootless.

Now, whatever other ways there are in which this may be done, we see how easily it is done by sorrows and troubles which exercise men. There is nothing which makes the world so empty, and so quickly empty, as great troubles, when they befall men: not all

troubles, but troubles that are troubles to you. There are some men who, if the foundations of their treasure-house were knocked from under them, would be crushed; but you might knock my property out from under me, and it would be no great trouble to me. I could bear it very easily; and I should deserve no credit for bearing it. That is not the point where I should suffer. There are many people who, because they have troubles which are troubles to other people, and stand up under them, think that they are proof against trouble; but, ah! it is not their trouble that they are bearing. When your trouble comes—the one that girds you, and takes hold of your very substance, and pierces your vital nerve, then you can see how you can bear trouble. In some, trouble is the dispersion of property; in some, it is the subordination of vanity; in some, it is the mortification of pride; in some, it is the taking away of a sense of power; in some, it is the destroying of affections. In various ways men are dealt with; and the same trouble does not affect all alike; but when a man has *his* trouble, it is trouble indeed.

I have known men that have gone through a great deal of rough experience, and sat and borne it well, like a ship that lustily threw off the waves on each side; but by-and-by a wave mounted their deck, and swept everything from stem to stern; and I have seen these men settle down and say, “*This is trouble!*” Ah! it found them at last, and it went to the very quick in them.

Now, bear witness, you that have had this astounding view, that, though for a time it brought discouragement, yet, after all, it left you with a sense, not of release from duty, but with another measurement of life—with a different sense of the value of things. You loved not less—perhaps more; you worked not less—perhaps more; you stored up not less—perhaps more; but, after all, there was a sense of the fugaciousness of things human; of the fugitiveness of human life. There was a sense that you were a stranger and pilgrim on earth.

There is first the joyful period. You will see young people come up gay and happy. I like to see it; but it does not last forever. I look at them by-and-by, in mid-life, and see the scars and lines which are beginning to show themselves on their once smooth features—the cinctures of trouble, which comes and stays awhile, and leaves its card. You will see persons go through this ordeal of life, and by-and-by come out with serene faces, much marred, but sweeter than before. They have gone through discipline, and planted their feet on the other side. They have come out rounded, perfected, ready to live, and ready to die whenever the summons

should come. That fact shows what their troubles have done—what their afflictions have wrought in them.

“A man’s life,” we are told, “consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses.” Nobody believes it. One thinks, “If I should write a poem, and have my name in all the world’s mouth, I should be happy.” No, you would not. Another man thinks, “If I could only learn to control a first-class organ, and really attain a cathedral position, I would ask no more.” You would not be any better off. You would be just as discontented, and more so. Another man says, “If I could only reach to a point of influence where I should feel that I had under my hand the government of a community, I should be contented.” Did you ever know a man that had reached that point who was content? Never. Another says, “If I could reach a hundred thousand dollars, I would be willing to compromise upon that.” At twenty-five years of age you would, but not at thirty. Then you would compromise on two hundred and fifty thousand. At thirty-five, you would compromise on five hundred thousand. At forty, you would compromise on a million; but at forty-five or fifty, you would not compromise on anything. Contentment does not grow in the ratio of time under such circumstances. And success in other directions, whether it be literary, whether it be social, or whether it be in the line of ambition, does not bring happiness. It certainly does not bring satisfaction. It does not bring fullness and evenness of enjoyment. The capacity for enjoyment does not hold in proportion to the acquisitions of men in this life. And the Word of God stands all the time saying to them:

“A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth.”

A man’s life lies deeper. It is a great thing when a man has been taught that. But the pulpit cannot teach it, as you can bear witness who have heard me preach it for twenty years, and have not yet learned the first letter of the alphabet of it. It cannot be reasoned into you. It is a thing which men will not take when it is offered to them in words. But after the teacher has passed out of sight, it may be; When they have been emptied out of happiness in the household, and emptied out of prosperity, then they accept it. Hundreds of men, after many years of instruction, and neglect thereof, all at once find themselves like an oak, which, after a tornado has gone by, lies spread upon the ground. But sometimes they learn, after awhile, that they are not clean gone, and become more happy and contented in their adversity than they were in their prosperity.

I have seen apple-trees in an orchard overturned so that four-fifths of all their roots were in the air, only the few remaining ones running into the ground; and after a summer or two the trees began to grow again, and make new roots; and thereafter they bore more apples than they ever did before. I have seen men who were never so happy as after they had been made supremely wretched.

You never yet saw a cluster that had the power in it before it had been crushed that it had after it had been crushed and brought to wine, with much suffering from violence and fermentation. For purposes of illustration, at least, wine is *good*!

There are thousands of men who never really come to that which is in them. They never come to the joy-producing power which they possess. Their life does not consist in the abundance of *things*: it consists in quality. And although we may have come by the way of the lion or the monkey, we are neither lions nor monkeys. You and I may have come into this life by what road soever you please, but we came bearing something of God in us; and everything that is in us is to grow toward the divine, and away from that exterior fact. Nothing in us that is divine can be fed with that which is undivine. You cannot bring hatred to love; you cannot bring grimace to beauty; you cannot bring contentment to the swollen depravities of the souls of men; you cannot from beastly qualities bring joy in its active forms and final developments, with all its effervescence and fruit. These qualities are not from *things*, but from that divine nature which has been brought out into power and truthfulness.

Thus many men who, by what is called *misfortune*, are driven out of society, are a hundred times happier in obscurity and poverty than they were in the day of their glory, when all men looked upon them and envied them. When their riches were gone, and all men forgot them, or pitied them, then they were triumphant.

Trouble teaches men how much there is in manhood. He who has by trouble been taught what manhood is, has his own strong castle, his own defence; and he can walk in the midst of life contented and happy though he be frowned upon. A man may be cast down and not destroyed. A man may be happy though he is beaten and trodden under foot by the age in which he lives. There are wanderers to-day whose staff is worth a hundred times more in history than the scepters of those who sit regnant on thorns. There are men lying in dungeons who are God's viceregents on earth. Manhood is inside of a man, and not outside of him.

These things are not taught in the academy, nor in the church.

nor anywhere except in practical life; but there they are taught abundantly. Let a man's cradle be turned over, and he finds instruction in the event. When the babe is gone out, there is a lesson left. Turn a man's household to darkness, blight his expectations, and then he is in a condition to learn. Oh, the ambition that he had for his child! And it is gone to dust. He leaned on this support, and it broke; he leaned on that, and it pierced him; he leaned on some other, and it crumbled beneath him. So long as these things upheld and nourished him, he relied on them; but by-and-by, when they failed him, he said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Then everybody is his. Then those that have lost children own all the children that live. Then those that are desolated bear in their bosoms all that are sad. There is an emancipation and a largeness in this education of trouble which cannot come by theory, and which cannot be learned in any school except that of darkness and sorrow and tears. Tears are the alphabet by which God teaches us many and many a truth of wisdom that no book of philosophy gives us. We do not know what is being done at this time; but thousands of persons are going through the school, and are going to graduate into happiness, who do not know that they are scholars.

The conflict of sorrow with self-will deserves a passing notice. There are many men who are thrown up as some mountain ridge, or some granite rock, has been thrown up, which has been wrought upon by external agencies; and it stands high and dry in its grandeur, and towers above all fields; but after all it is barren and hard.

There are proud men who carry their heads high. They will have their own way. They care for nobody nor anything. They look down on men as the glacier does upon the valley below. The ice in winter splits the granite mass, and triturates it, so that, by-and-by, little by little, the mountain comes pouring down in the form of gravel and sand, sweeping off all vegetable growth. But at the base of the mountain, creeping up more and more all the time, is vegetation, as the result of the disintegration of the rock above.

So experiences of trouble, of severe dealings, with obstinate men, cover them down; and by-and-by, if nothing better is the result, they are at last covered with moss which grows from the soil that is produced from the breaking up of their self-will, their obstinacy, and their hardheartedness. When God takes these things in hand, how often do they roll down and become soil out of which spring rich growths!

Take Paul. Was there ever a man who had such a barren top-head as he had when he went raging and persecuting to Damascus? And was there ever a man over whose pride and self-will there grew such masterly beauty of vegetation as grew over his when trouble had dealt with him?

Then there is conflict of sorrow with conceit. This is the hardest conflict of any I have mentioned; for conceit is the most incurable disease that is known to the human soul. Many of our faults of youth are cured by middle age, and many of our faults of middle age are cured by old age, through the natural unfoldings of time; but conceit, if it be present in youth, is stronger in manhood, and is strongest in old age.

"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."

Now, he that sows fools may expect a very poor crop; and if a conceited man has even less to expect, how poor he is! If anything can be made out of conceit, it must be done by sorrow; and sorrows of no small measure, only piercing, penetrating sorrows, are adequate to this work.

The same is true of pride. Sorrows reveal to us the unworthiness of the instruments which our pride employs, and all its aim. They temper the austerity and arrogance of pride. They take down the loftiness which one has in respect to his own person, and substitute for it loftiness of quality, loftiness of ambition. They take away from pride its hardness and harshness and unsympathizing nature.

One of the most beautiful and transcendent sights in the world is to see a real warrior whose pride has been tempered by life, so that he comes out in his old age mellow, and sympathetic, and humble, and sweet. We go to Europe to see Mont Blanc—well, that is worth seeing; we go to Zermott to see the Matterhorn—and that is worth seeing; we go down to the coast after a southern storm to see the waves come in—and they are worth seeing; we go to see the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, and Weirs Cave in Virginia—and these are worth seeing; we go all over the world to see great sights; but I tell you that the greatest sight that you ever saw in the world is a man. And yet, though men are all round about you, you never stop to look at them. Man is the greatest work of God, who through all time, and with ten thousand hands and fingers, has been at work. And he has wrought change until all hirsuteness is lost from the exterior; until hardness is gone from the heart; until niggardliness is gone from the disposition; until inharmonious natures give forth a concordant, musical tone. Men and women

have been, as it were, reconstructed by the solemn touch and dark waves of sorrow. The world has such transformed men all around about us. We do not know them. We have them in our own houses ; but as Christ came to his own, and his own received him not, so we come to our own, and we know them not. We do not know what man is. We are so little adapted to measure things in this life, that the best things about us are as if they were of no value ; and we go gaping all over creation to see something wonderful.

The overcoming of the pride of riches by sorrow is a great work—a work which can scarcely be done in any other way. I do not know that riches ever cured the love of riches. I do not know that having ever cured the desire to have. The pride of skill, the pride of discovery, the pride of organization, the pride of power which men carry in them, is only curable by trouble.

There is many a man who is delivered from the power of his basilar instincts by sorrow. Many a man carries in himself a supreme feeling of princeliness based on his capacity to manage men ; to control things ; to accumulate and organize riches. And this may be neither coarse nor vulgar. I need not say to you that I regard it as a school in which many virtues are learned. I need not tell you that I regard the development of industry in this world as one of God's primary institutions by which he lays the foundations of morality and civilization, and brings men along in the path of development. But no man ever learned the higher forms of manhood through and through by this means. No men need the touch of trouble more than men who are greatly prospered in outward things. It is not said that the rich cannot be saved ; but it is said,

“How hardly shall a rich man enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Why is it so? It is not so—it is not so. It *is* so—it *is* so. No, it is *not* so—it is *not* so. I say it *is*. It is both. It is either. Generally a rich man strikes his roots into his riches, and undertakes to grow upon them, and by them. Where that is the case, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. But if a rich man has power such that his manhood surpasses his riches ; if he has had such dealing that his faults are absolutely subordinated, and that high above all that he possesses is the possessor, so that when men look upon him they never think of his money but only of him, then it is easy for him, though he be rich, to go into the kingdom of heaven ; and he will go triumphing in.

I can mention persons (but I shall not ; if you think of them,

it will be you, and not me) whose names, when they are mentioned, suggest thirty million dollars or its equivalent. The moment the names of some men are pronounced, you think of them as men who are managing railroads, or carrying on financial operations—as men who are doing battle in the physical world; and their whole manhood makes no suggestion to you of anything but money. When they are dead, men say, “What! won’t stocks go down?” they are men of whom it is said, “Ah! won’t there be a scattering when those men die?” This is all the impression that they leave upon you and upon the world.

You might go into a man’s business, and take his book, and destroy it, and he might say, “In destroying that book you have destroyed all the threads and connections of my accounts; and my affairs are in confusion; my business has gone with that book.” In a great business, the man who manages it might die without being missed very seriously; but if the book in which the accounts of that business were kept was lost or burned, the business would be seriously disturbed if not destroyed.

Now, when a man represents nothing but banks, and ships, and warehouses, and bonds, and stocks, and soil, and roads, if he dies and leaves these things, there is nothing else of him, and he is without anything to take up to heaven with him which will be recognized as anything there. If a man, having these things, attempts with them to go up and pass through the gate of heaven, there is room enough for all the generations of men upon the earth, for millions of men, to go in; but the passage is not wide enough for one single railroad or bank to pass through. If a man straps his property on his back, and attempts to go through heaven’s gate, he never will succeed. Riches cannot enter heaven. There is no enmity between riches and God; he made them; and the cattle on a thousand hills are his; he holds them in his hands through the whole dispensation of his providence, as promises or rewards. He rewards men or punishes them, according to what he sees to be their needs. And a man who has his whole manhood centered in his possessions—how hardly shall he enter the kingdom of God! First, because there is so little of him; and secondly, because what there is of him is like gold which is so bedded in the rock that you cannot get at it until you break the rock all to atoms.

Now, sorrows that bring down and cure this fever of loss or gain; sorrows that destroy men, apparently, oftentimes save a man—emancipate him. I have seen what I thought to be well authenticated accounts of quarries being opened, when behold, on breaking a rock, a toad was found within it, in a little chamber, as

though there had been deposits about him; as though material substances had been amassed around him. And for some reason, as the story goes, he was stupefied, but was alive. This is one of the fables of geology, if it be not a fact. And it is said that when the rock was broken open, the toad hopped out, and came to light and life again. And it was only by violence that he was got out.

There are a great many men who have just exactly such a chamber that they are shut up in. They have been pulling, pulling the soil of their property over them, till by-and-by they are imprisoned therein, like a toad in a stone; and there they are; and no man knows any difference between the living thing inside and the inanimate covering outside. What is needed is, that there should come some rending, some breaking, by which this enclosure shall be broken, and entirely removed, and that which it contains brought to life and light—not the toad, but the man. Would it not be worth while to have some such trouble for such a purpose? Would not the deliverance be a glorious one? Has not many a man gone out of his property bankrupt, and found himself outside of it? Has there not been many a man who, when he was enveloped in his property, did not know himself, and in whom nothing could be looked upon with great complacency, but who, when he was struck and splintered, when he was ground smaller and finer than the dust, and men said, “He is ruined, lost, and good for nothing,” then, for the first time, began to find himself, and to be good for something?

“Are you going back on to the street again?” says a man to a millionaire that was, but is not. “No,” is the reply. “What! have you lost all spirit? Is your pluck all gone? Don’t you dare to try again? Do you want some help? I am perfectly willing to give you a lift.” “No, I don’t care for it.” “Well, where are you now?” “Oh, I’ve gone out to such a place.” “What are you doing?” “Living in a cottage, with a small bit of land, and comfortably supporting myself.” “But you are a young man, and there is time enough for you to work out a splendid future in business yet. What are you doing, anyhow?” “Well, I’m doing what good I can.” The man turns away, and says, “I would not be like him. Let me be overturned in my affairs as he has been, and see if I will lose all spunk, all spirit. If I were in his place, I would wrestle to the last, and die with the harness on.” Yes; you *would* die with the harness on, and you would drop like a mule in your tracks!

This man who was thought to be so unfortunate did not know what there was for him in manhood or in this world till he was

dispossessed of the sorcery that had been laid upon him. The charm was broken. He began to know what peace of mind was. He began to know what it was to commune with God. He began to have an interpretation of nature which made all things sweet to him, morning, noon, and evening. Here is this great vocal book, out of which Beethoven learned, out of which every singing man learned, out of which Milton learned, and which taught Shakespeare; but men are ignorant of the very first punctuation point of this vast literature which is yours and mine and theirs. They do not study nor see what is written there. But the man who has learned, taught by trouble, to come into communion with God, and knows how to look at his fellow-men on their better sides, has about him the light of immortal peace, the joy of the Holy Ghost, and is richer than ingots of gold would make him, is happier than he would be if he sat charmed by all the flatteries of the palace, and is more prosperous than if every city had done him honor. He has found his manhood through tears and through sorrow. He has learned the way of joy and of peace.

"All that is very well," you will say, "but those are not my troubles. I neither was very proud, nor very conceited, nor very vain; nor was I avaricious of riches. I lived in God; and all I asked of him was, 'Preserve my household, and preserve me.' I prayed God that he would make me worthy to bring up my children. He knows it. I was willing to give up pleasure, the world, everything, if God would strengthen me, and help me to be faithful. There is over on the other side of the way a woman who is half her time drunk, she is not fit to be a mother; and yet, her children are healthy, and red-cheeked, and buoyant; they live, and my children, that I meant so well by, are gone. I know that I was fitter to take care of my children than she was to take care of hers; and why were mine taken, and hers spared?"

Well, wait a little. I go again, in a year, to see her, and say, "My friend, how is it with you now? Are you more peaceful?" "Somewhat." "What are you doing?" "Well, I could not bear heartache; I could not bear to have empty arms; so I gathered a few children around me, and I am trying to do a mother's part by them. I bring some of these children over to my house every day, and am teaching them."

I wait another year, and go to see her again. Oh, deep-hearted woman! how many children hast thou? I look upon her now, and see that the discipline through which she has gone has made her love so deep that one might stand and say, "It is deep, and there is nothing to draw with." It is a fountain of affection that does not

stop upon blood or kinship. Where there is want, there is her sympathy ; where there is need, there is her heart ready to supply it. She has been made angelic, God-like ; and it is the discipline of trouble that has done it. If she had grown up a happy mother, she might have been useful ; but, after all, when you measure as God does, by the disposition, where shall you find any that are so fitted for heaven as they who have been princes of suffering ? I do not say that in every case suffering is the cause ; I give single instances ; but I say that God is a wonder-working God ; that he knows better, in such a world as this, how to deal with you than others do ; that by silent ways he is dissolving the rock, and making vegetation grow where it would not grow of its own accord ; that he is turning the garden into a wilderness, and the wilderness into a garden ; that he is taking from you and giving to you for your good ; that he is doing ten thousand things for your inward purification here, and your coronation in the eternal world.

If, then, there comes an experience that you cannot read, let it be till the light of heaven interprets the letters thereof. If troubles come that you cannot bear of yourself, then lean on God. And remember, above all other things, to “look unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Your God’s name is *Jesus*, the man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, now triumphant over both, and standing in the plenitude of divine wisdom and glory and power, and administering the economy of this life ; so that, precious souls, by sorrow as well as by joy, you shall all be adapted and fitted for immortality and blessedness.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

O thou Spirit of life and of truth; thou bright and shining Light afar off, yet shining into us; thou who bringest us twilight whilst thou dwellest in the noon, and eternal blessedness of the summer of heaven! we draw near to thee, stumbling, lost, and full of weakness and incertitude, with pain, with sorrow, with burdens, tempted, and evermore finding the limitations of ourselves. We draw near to thee, not to ask the full revelation of thyself—we cannot attain to that; not to ask a solution of all the mysteries of life that surround us—we are not able to understand these. We draw near to thee, asking that we may have strength and comfort each day, and that they may be consciously the strength and the comfort which we have from God. We pray that we may have rising up in the midst of pleasure, and out of society, and from all our associations with each other, a thought of thy presence which not only shall make thee true, but shall interpret thee, so that in the midst of life thou shalt be nearer to us, and greater than all other things. May we be able, at least now and then, to see thee transfigured. May we be able to draw near in some hours, when we are most oppressed, and say, My God. May we in some hours, when we can say nothing, be found of thee, as he that was cast out of the synagogue; and speak thou with us, and forgive us, and heal us, and comfort us. For, not only are we far off, but we are orphaned. We are much neglected, one by another. We are bringing unfit things to each other. Our imperfections—how do they jar! And how is life filled with the discords which our souls make! As callow-birds cannot whisper even the notes which, by-and-by, in another summer, they will sing, how do our voices not utter songs, but often only groans which are the prophecies of better things! How poor and needy we are! How much do we bemoan, not only our infelicities and our infirmities, but our sins that humble us; that hew out the very life of the soul; and that are our deadly enemies, and thine! But if it were not that the brooding Spirit above was all-healing, we should be in despair. We come to thee, not as to a judge impartial and unfeeling; we draw near to thee, not as to an angry monarch whose will has been disregarded and trodden under foot; we cry out to thee as children in the night cry out to their mother. We call to thee, simply knowing how weak we are, and how much we need, and in the full faith that thou, whatever be thy name, art a present help in time of trouble. It is to thee, as to a father who pitieth his children, and knoweth their frame, that they are dust, that we come. The consolation of our life, our hope of the future, our joy of the present, is our faith in thee, and that thou art that which we need, and far more than we can conceive. Yea, as a hen sitteth upon the eggs, and upon her chickens, and is fitted to them, and they are covered by her wings, and lie half-warmed by her, so dost thou gather under thy wings those that put their trust in thee, and fit thyself to them, lending thyself to them, and thy life to their life.

In this helpful God, in this forgiving and loving God, in this God that will not suffer men to go wrong, but that, by ten thousand instrumentalities, visible and invisible, art shaping all things to rectitude, to purity, and to truth—in this God, who guides the groaning realm which travails in pain until now, and guides it for the consummation of victory, when righteousness shall prevail, and imperfections shall die, and death itself shall be overcome—in this God we trust. To this God we cry out. And in the plenitude of hope, in the fullness of joy, we draw near to thee, O thou all-helpful One!

And now, what need we to ask for? In the conception of thee we have all that can be given us. We rest in the Lord.

Grant, then, that every one in thy presence to-day may be able to take from thee that strength which he needs. May those that have cares which gird them as the harness girds the skin, and chafes to the soreness thereof, be able to rest themselves, casting away, to-day, their harness and their cares. May those who are tempted more than they can bear, and who maintain through the week a sense of shame by reason of inconstancy and of a perpetual coming short of their purposes, stumbling and reeling where they meant to have walked strongly—may they, to-day, find rest in God, and peace in trusting to him. Grant that every one that hath fallen may be lifted up. May those that have wandered be brought back. Why should any set their faces toward darkness? Why should any go away from the garden toward the wilderness? Why should any go away from fragrant things that are sweeter in the crushing? And why should any be torn of thorns and of thistles? Bring back thy wandering ones.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt draw near to any who are in trouble; to any that have experienced sudden overthrow; to any whose plans, nourished and built carefully for years, are, as it were, swept away by the strength of thy right hand, so that what in rising may seem to them a stately fabric is now only dust to their sight.

Be near, we pray thee, to those who are in the midst of bereavements and great sorrows. In their darkness may they find light. In their solitude may they hear the voice of consolation. And may that be done for them by the hand of God—by the pierced hand—which no one can do for them among their friends. Enter thou, O Spirit of all comfort! into bereaved hearts, to cheer them, and to help them, and to lift them, and to give them light and patience, and an uncomplaining disposition. Still may there rise above all their thought the beauty and the strength of the love of God, who is the Author and will be the Finisher of that faith which is wrought out in sorrow and affliction.

We pray that thou wilt deliver from doubt all those who lie becalmed off the shore where thou art, yet unable to see the land, or move. We pray that thou wilt cause the wind to rise and blow away the mists that hide thee from them; and we pray that thou wilt bring them to the harbor of peace, to trust, to faith, to consecration, to activity in things good.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who are gathered together this morning, out of the families of this great church—this Christian household. Sanctify their joy or their sorrow in the manifold and checkered experiences of life. May they all be so many things which are upbuilding those who are waiting for life and immortality.

We pray that thou wilt remember those who do not remember themselves nor their duties—the children of parents who are gone; those who were taught to pray, and have forgotten how; those who knew the right way, and have fallen out of it; those whom men turn against; those whom no man succeeds, and against whom so many hearts are sealed.

We pray for those who are sick, for those who are imprisoned, and for those who are set apart unto death.

We pray for the great human family.

O God, we ask not to interpret thy providence. We ask not any more to know the meaning of it; we ask not any more to know the unfoldings of the future: we simply ask to know thee. The knowledge of God is wisdom. Give us so much knowledge of thee that, in light or in darkness, in mystery or in clarity, in things hidden or in things revealed, we may be able to say, I know that my Redeemer liveth. And living in this sacred trust, may we be peaceful, and hopeful, and expectant, and may we be able to die at rest,

undisquieted, rejoicing in coming glory, and in the hope of redemption through Christ. And looking forward to a blessed meeting, may we bid farewell to this life, and enter the life to come, to be forever with the Lord.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee to grant thy blessing to rest upon us. Shape the blessing to thine own indwelling; and abide with us, not in the evening alone, but in the morning and in the day. Interpret to us what thou wilt; and grant that we may have that faith in thee which shall be beyond all interpretation. May our hope be, not in this, nor in that, but in God. There may we stand; there may we rejoice; there may we find quiet when the storm is out. Hide us in thy pavilion until the storm be past. When the burdens are heavy, thou, Burden-bearer, touch them, not that they may fall from us, but that there may be imparted to us the strength which is necessary to carry them. May we be able every day to say, Thy will be done. So may we live, and so dying, may we live again in that land where prayers are needed no longer, but where praises shall sound forever. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be the praise. *Amen.*

IMMORTALITY.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19.

This is not the declaration of a universal principle: it is biographical and personal. And yet, there is in it a principle of prime importance. It is true that Paul and his compeers had sacrificed everything that was dear to man for the sake of Christ. Paul had given up the place that he had held among his countrymen, and the things which surely awaited him. He had consented to be an exile. Loving Palestine and the memory of his fathers, as only a Jew could love, he found himself an outcast, and despised everywhere by his own people. And the catalogue that he gives of the sufferings which he felt keenly; which perhaps would not have been felt by a man less susceptible than he, but which were no less keen in his case—that catalogue shows how much he had given up for Christ. And if it should turn out that after all he had followed a mere fable, a myth; that Christ was but a man; that, dying, he had come to an end; that he stayed dead, and that there was no resurrection, no future, but only that past through which he had waded, and that present in which he was suffering, then, surely, it would be true that of all men he was most miserable.

This is the biographical view; but it may be said of all men, in this respect, that no persons can so ill afford to lose faith of immortality as those who have had all their affections burnished, deepened and rendered sensitive by the power of Christianity. When Christianity has had the education of generation after generation, and has shaped the style of its manhood, and ordained the institutions by which its affections have been enlarged and purified; when, in short, generations of men have been legitimately the

children of Christianity, to take away from them the faith of immortality would be a cruelty which could have no parallel in the amount of suffering which it would entail.

It is not necessarily true that men without a hope of Christianity would have no incitement to virtue—certainly not in the ordinary way in which it is put to us. Abstractly, it is said that virtue is its own reward—and it is. If there was enough of it to amount to anything, it would be a great, an exceeding great, reward; but where it is a spark, a germ; where it is struggling for its own existence; where it bears but a few ripe fruits, the reward is hardly worth the culture. If all that we get is what we have in this life, it is but little.

Many men are favorably organized and favorably situated; they have an unyearning content; things seem good enough for them; and they do not understand why it is that persons should desire immortality and glory—that is, at first. In general, I think there are few persons that live long in life who do not, sooner or later, come to a point in which they wake up to the consciousness of a need of this kind. It is not always true in the case of persons of refined moral and intellectual culture that they are conscious of needing a belief in immortality; but a belief in immortality is the unavoidable result and the indispensable requirement of all true manhood. When you look at growth, not in each particular case, but largely, as it develops itself in communities; when you consider it, not only in a single individual, but in whole communities, as they develop from childhood to manhood, or from barbarism through semi-civilization to civilization and refinement, the law of development is always away from animal life and its sustaining appetites and passions toward the moral and the intellectual. That is the direction in which unfolding takes place.

The naturalist watches the insect, and studies all the stages through which it goes, till it becomes a perfect insect. We look at a seed, and see how it develops stem and leaf and blossom all the way through, till we find out what the plant is in its final and perfect condition. And in studying men to know what is the perfect condition of manhood, looking at them from the beginning to the end, which way does manhood lie, in the direction of the bodily appetites and senses, or in the other direction?

Men come into life perfect animals. There is very little that culture does in that direction, giving them a little more or a little less use of themselves, as the case may be. That which we mean when we speak of developing manhood in a child, is something more than the development of symmetry of form and power of

physical organization. When we speak of the civilization and refinement of the race at large, development does not mean bodily power nor bodily skill: it means reason; moral sense; imagination; profounder affection; subtler, purer, sweeter domestic relations. Manhood grows away from bodily conditions, without ever leaving them. The body becomes a socket, and the soul is a lamp in it. And if you look narrowly at what we mean by growth in mankind, whether it be applied to the individual or to the race, you will find that we mean an unfolding which takes a man away from the material toward that which is subtler, more spiritual, existing outside of the ordinary senses, though acting from them, as something better than bone and muscle, nerve and tissue.

All development, then, is from the animal toward the spiritual and the invisible. This is the public sentiment of mankind even in the lower forms of society. What are considered heroic traits, the things which bring admiration to men, if narrowly examined will be found to be not the things which belong to men as brutes—though these things may be employed by them as instruments. Even in the cases of such men as Samson and Hercules, who were rude, brute men, it was not their strength that drew admiration to them: it was their heroism; it was their patriotism; it was that which they did *by* their strength for their kind, and not for themselves. And in lower societies it is courage, it is self-devotion, it is the want of fear, it is the higher form of animal life, that attracts admiration. But as we develop out of barbarous into civilized conditions, we admire men, not because they **can lift so much**, or throw such heavy weights, or endure such hardships of body. Admiration on these accounts has its place; but higher than these is the power of thought, the power of planning, the power of executing, the power of living at one point so as to comprehend in the effects produced all circuits of time in the future. Thought-power; emotion; moral sense; justice; equity in all its forms; higher manhood, and its branches, which stretch up into the atmosphere and reach nearest to the sun—these are something other than those qualities which develop earliest, and are lowest—nearest to the ground.

True manhood, then, has its ripeness in the higher faculties. Without disdaining the companionship of the body, the manhood of man grows away from it—in another direction. There is not simply the ripening of the physical that is in man; but there is, by means of the physical, the ripening of the intellectual, the emotional, the moral, the aesthetic life, as well as the whole spiritual nature.

When reason and the moral sense are developed, there will inevitably spring up within a man an element the value of which consists in perpetuating things—in their continuance. It is spontaneous and universal for one to seek to perpetuate, to extend, life. I do not mean by this that one wants to live a great while; but men are perpetually under the unconscious influence of this in their nature: the attempt to give form and permanence to that which is best in their manhood. We build, to be sure, primarily, to cover ourselves from the elements; but we very soon cease to build for that only: we not merely build for protection from cold and from wet, but we build for gratification. We build to gratify the sense of beauty, the sense of convenience, and the sense of love. And we go on beyond that: we build in order that we may send down to those who are to come after us a memorial of our embodied, incarnated thoughts. In other words, when men build, they seek, by incarnation, to render things permanent which have existed only as thoughts or transient emotions. There is a tendency to incarnate the fugitive elements in men, and give them permanence. And the element of continuing is one of the elements which belong to the higher manhood.

This throws light upon the material growths of society. Men strive to perpetuate thoughts and feelings which are evanescent unless they are born into matter. Men build things for duration. There is this unconscious following out of things to make them last; to give them long periods. And it opens up to men the sense of their augmented being. Largeness of being is indissolubly connected with extended time of being.

We admire the pyramids, not because they have been associated with so many histories, but because they have stood so many ages. We admire old trees, not because so many tribes have sat under them, nor because so many events have taken place beneath them, but simply because they have age with them. For there are mute, inexplicable feelings connected with the mere extension of time which belong to the higher development of manhood in us. Frangible things are of less value than things that are infrangible. Things that last are of more value, on the same plane, than their congeners are that do not last.

Who can equal the pictures which are painted on the panes of glass in our winter rooms? Where can you find a *Lambineau*, or any painter who can give mountain scenery such as we have for nothing, every morning, when we wake up, and such as the sun outside, or the stove inside, destroys before ten o'clock? These pictures are not valued as are those which are painted on canvas,

and which are not half so good ; but the element of enduring is with the latter, while the element of evanescence is with the former. Though the pictures on the pane are finer than those on the canvas, they lack the element of time, on which value so largely depends. The soul craves, hungers for, this quality of continuance as an element for measuring the value of things. This element of time is somewhat felt in the earlier conditions of humanity ; but it grows with the development of men, and attaches itself to every part of human life.

I never saw a diamond that was so beautiful as are the dew-drops which I see on my lawn in summer. What is the difference between a dew-drop and a diamond ? One goes in a moment ; it flashes and dies ; but the other endures ; and its value consists in its endurance. There are hundreds of things which are as beautiful as a diamond in their moment ; but the endurance of the diamond is measured by ages, and not by moments, and so carries on the value.

I do not draw these reasonings very close as yet—I do not desire to put too much emphasis upon them ; but I think you will see that there is a drift in them, and that they will bear, at last, an important relation to this question of immortality. The element of manhood carries with it a very powerful sense of the value of existence. The desire to live is a blind instinct. A happy experience brings to this instinct many auxiliaries—the expectation of pleasure ; the wish to complete unfinished things ; the clinging of affection to those that have excited love ; and habits of enterprise.

Besides all these, is a development of the sense of value in simply being. We have said that in external matters the continuity of being is an element of value in the judgment which mankind at large have put upon things. We say that the same is true in respect to the inward existence—to manhood itself. The savage cares very little for life. He lives for to-day ; and in every to-day he lives for the hour. Time is of the least importance to him. The barbarian differs from the savage in this : that he lives to-day for to-morrow, perhaps, but not for next year. The semi-civilized man lives for next year ; but only for the year, or for years. The civilized man begins to live in the present for the future. And the *Christian* civilized man begins to live with a sense of the forever.

The extension of the sense of time goes with the development of manhood in men. The sweet, the tender, the loving, the thoughtful, the intellectual, live not simply with a sense of life as a pleasure-bringer : there grows up in them, with their development

toward manhood, an intrinsic sense of the value of being itself. The soul knows the cargo that it carries. It knows that that cargo is destined to immortality. As men are conscious of seeing more, of thinking more, and of feeling more; as thought becomes more precious; as emotion becomes deeper and more valuable; so men more and more feel that they cannot afford to have such things go to waste.

A man who takes in his hand a lump of mud and molds it to some pleasing form, cares but little when, dropping it, he sees it flatten on the ground. The man that grinds a crystal, and sees it broken, thinks of it for a moment, perhaps, with regret, but soon forgets it. No one, however, can see an organized thing, having its uses, and indicating exquisite skill and long experience, dashed to pieces without pain. But what is anything that is organized in life worth in comparison with the soul of a man? And if that soul be pure, and sweet, and deep, and noble, and active, and fruitful, who can, without a pang, look at it, and think that it must in an instant go to nothing, dissolving again as an icicle from a roof in the spring?

This feeling is not the fruit of mere reflection. It is instinctive. It is universal. Men do not cultivate it on purpose. They cannot help having it. No man of moral culture can regard human life as without immortality except with profound melancholy. No man that is susceptible to reflectiveness can bear to think of man's existence here without the bright background of another life.

This sense of the continuity of existence is grounded in men, and grows with their refinement and development and strength, and gives color to their life, and change to their opinions, it may be.

To men who have developed moral sense and intellectual culture, every element of value in life is made precious by some conscious or some unconscious element of time and continuance. It is the nature of our better faculties, in their better states, to place a man in such relations to everything that is most precious to him, that it gives him pleasure in the proportion in which it seems to be continuous and permanent, and gives him pain in the proportion in which it seems to be evanescent and perishing.

We are building a crystal character with much pain and self-denial; and is it to be built as bubbles are blown? What is finer in line than the bubble? What is more airy? Where are pictures more exquisite, where are colors more tender and rich and beautiful—and where is there anything that is born so near to its end as a bubble? Is the character which we are building with so much pain and suffering and patience, with so much burden of

conscience, and with so much aspiration; is the character which we are forming in the invisible realm of the soul—is that but a bubble? Is that only a thin film which reflects the transient experiences of a life of joy or sadness, and goes out? Then, what is life worth? If I had no function but that of a pismire; if I were a beetle that rolled in the dirt, and yet were clothed with a power of reflection, and knew what the depths of feeling were, what intense emotions were, and what struggling and yearning were; if, being a mere insect, I had all that works in the intellect of man, and all the aspiration that goes with spiritual elements; if I were but a leaf-cutter, a bug in the soil, or about the same thing on a little larger pattern, and were to be blotted out at death, what would be the use of my trying to grow? If by refining and whetting our faculties they become more susceptible to pleasure, they become equally susceptible to pain. And in this great, grinding, groaning world, pain is altogether out of proportion to pleasure, in an exquisite temperament. The finer men are the better they are, if they are forever; but the finer men are the worse they are, if they are only for a day; for they have a disproportion of sensibility to suffering over and above present remuneration and conscious enjoyment.

Men feel an intrinsic sense of personality and personal worth. They have self-esteem, which is the only central, spinal, manly faculty which gives them a sense of personal identity and personal value, and which is an auxiliary counsellor of conscience itself. This sense of *I* demands something more than a short round of physical life, to be followed by extinction. I am too valuable to perish so; and every step in life has been training me in the direction of greater value. As men grow broader, and stronger, and finer, and deeper, and sweeter, they become more and more conscious of the intrinsic value of their being, and demand for themselves a harbor in order that they may not be wrecked or foundered.

Nor do I think that there can be found, to any considerable extent, or developed, friendships which shall not, with all their strength and with all their depth, resist the conception of dissolution or of fading. For friendships are not casual likings. Friendships are not merely the interchange of good nature, and the ordinary friendly offices of good neighborhood. These things are friendly, but they do not comprise friendship. Two trees may grow contiguous, and throw their shade one over upon the other; but they never touch nor help each other; and their roots quarrel for the food that is in the ground. But two vines, growing over a porch, meet each other, and twine together, and twist fiber into fiber and stem into stem, and take shape from each other, and are

substantially one. And such are friendships. Now, one cannot have his life divided as two trees are. He cannot enter into partnership with others, and be conscious that that partnership shall be but for an hour or for a moment. The sanctity, the honor, the exaltation, the exhilaration of a true and manly friendship lies in the thought of its continuance. There can be no deep friendship which does not sigh for endlessness.

Still more is this true of love: not that rudimentary form which seeks lower fruitions, and which is often but little more than passion done up in friendship; but that higher love which manifests itself chiefly in the spiritual realm; that love which is not forever asking, but forever giving; that love which is not centripetal, but centrifugal; that love which, like a mother's, gives for the pleasure of giving; that love which reveres; that love which looks up; that love which seeks to exalt its object by doing what is pleasant and noble; that love which demands continuance, elevation, yea, grandeur, it may be, in the thing beloved. How little will such a love tolerate the idea of evanescence, the dread of discontinuing! Can such a love do other than yearn for immortality?

So then, if you take the thought, it is this: that if men develop, they come under the dominion of higher faculties; and that it is then their nature to stamp on all their occupations, on their self-consciousness, on the whole development of their affections, the need of continuance, of immortality. There are, therefore, in the growth of the mind itself, as a department of nature, these elements of conviction. The mind cannot do other than develop in itself a faith in immortality.

It may be said, and it sometimes is said, that the origin of the belief of existence out of the body—of spiritual existence—may be traced directly back to the dreams of the barbarous ages—to a period when men were so low that they did not recognize the difference between a dream and a waking reality—to a time when persons dreamed that their friends came back to them, and waked up and believed that they had been back. Thus, it is said, began the thought of continuity of life after death. For my part, I do not care how it began. The question is not how it started: the question is, What becomes of it now that it has begun? No matter how it was born, what purpose is it to serve? What is it adapted to do? How is it calculated to influence our manhood? In what way shall it be employed to lead man God-ward? How shall it be used to work most effectually in the direction of civilization and refinement? It so fits every human soul, that men will not let it go. They cling to it with their inward and best nature.

All the experiences of human life fall in with this tendency of the mind. When men look out upon the incoherent and unmannerly course of things in time, I can understand how, believing in the future, they may live with patience; but in every age of the world where the clear light of immortality has not shone, men have mostly been discouraged, have been generally indifferent to public superiority, and have taken no interest in things done for the sake of humanity. Such is the worthlessness of time, to the thought of those that have no faith in the future, that they have cared for little except present physical enjoyment. And on the whole, when such men crowd together, and tribes take the place of individuals, or kingdoms take the place of tribes, with all their complications in the working out of their clashing results, they look upon human life, and feel that the world is not worth living for. Things are so uncertain, products are in such disproportion to their causes, or to the expectations of men, that if there is to be nothing but this life, then, "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die," is not only the philosophy of the epicurean, but the temptation of the most wise and frugal and self-restraining. The nature of life to a man who is highly educated, requires that he should believe in the continuity and existence of the myriads that he sees in such a state of quarreling infelicity and wretchedness in this mortal condition. The utter futility of the best part of a man's life here, the total bankruptcy of his best endeavors, the worthlessness of his career from the material standpoint, makes it imperative on him to believe that he shall have another chance in another sphere of being.

Is it enough to have been born, to have lived till one is of age, and then to be launched out to founder in mid ocean? Is it enough that one should devote the best part of his life to the building of a character, only to see the fabric which he has constructed tumbling about his ears? Is this enough in the day of distress and bankruptcy? Is it enough, in the time when a man's ambitions are crossed, and the sky is dark, and he can do nothing but stand amid the ruins of his hopes and expectations? Is not the thought revolting to every instinct of manhood?

But if there is another life; if all our labor has this value in it, that while a man is building up his outward estate he is more powerfully building up his inward estate; if it is certain that the man himself will live, no matter what becomes of his property and his reputation, then, all his endeavors have endless scope, and his life becomes redeemable and radiant.

Nowhere else so much as in the realm of grief, I think, is the question of immortality interpreted. It is true that the first shock

of overwhelming grief sometimes drives faith out of the mind; that it sometimes staggers the reason; that it sometimes dispossesses the moral sense of its accustomed health, and leaves the mind in weakness. As in a fever, the natural eye can see nothing aright, and things seem to dance in the air, and take on grotesque forms, so persons who are bewildered with first sorrow oftentimes see things amiss. And there is no skepticism which is so deep and pulseless as that which often takes possession of people in the first great overmastering surprise and shock of grief. But after one has recovered a little, and the nerve has come to its wonted sensibility, the faith of immortality returns. There is that in every soul which knows what is the strength of life and noble deeds and aspirations; and therefore there is that in every soul which calls out for immortality.

I cannot believe, I will not believe, when I walk upon the clod, that it is my mother that I tread under foot. She that bore me, she that every year more than gave birth to me out of her own soul's aspiration—I will not believe that she is dust. Everything within me revolts at the idea.

Do two persons walk together in an inseparable union, mingling their brightest and noblest thoughts, striving for the highest ideal, like flowers that grow by the side of each other, breathing fragrance each on the other, and shining in beauty each for the other; are two persons thus twined together and bound together for life, until in some dark hour one is called and the other is left; and does the bleeding heart go down to the grave and say, "I return dust to dust?" Was that dust, then? That trustworthiness; that fidelity; that frankness of truth; that transparent honesty; that heroism of love; that disinterestedness; that fitness and exquisiteness of taste; that fervor of love; that aspiration; that power of conviction; that piety; that great hope in God—were all these elements in the soul of the companion that has disappeared but just so many phenomena of matter? And have they already collapsed and gone, like last year's flowers struck with frost, back again to the mold? In the grief of such an hour one *will not* let go the hope of resurrection.

Can a parent go back from the grave where he has laid his children, and say, "I shall never see them more?" Even as far back as the dim twilight in which David lived, he said, "Thou shalt not come to me, but I shall go to thee;" and is it possible for the parental heart to stand in our day by the side of the grave where children have been put out of sight, and say, "They neither shall come to me, nor shall I go to them; they are blossoms that have fallen; they never shall bring forth fruit?" It is unnatural. It is hideous

Everything that is in man, every instinct that is best in human nature repels it.

Is not the human soul, then, itself a witness of the truth of immortality?

Men say, "You cannot prove it. There is no argument that can establish it. No man has seen it, and it cannot be substantiated. It is not a ponderable thing." Men demand that we should prove things by straight lines; by the alembic; by scales; by analysis; but I say that there is much in nature which is so high that scales and rules and alembics cannot touch it. And is not man's soul a part of nature—the highest part?

I hold that even the materialist may believe in immortality. For, although there is a gross kind of materialism, there may be a materialism which is consistent with a belief in immortality. Because, on the supposition that mind is matter, it must be admitted that it is incomparably superior to any other matter that we are familiar with. Is there any matter outside of mind that produces thought and feeling such as we see evolved among men? If it be the theory that mind is matter, and if the matter of which the mind is composed be so far above all other kinds of matter in its fruit and product, is it not on so high a plane as presumably not to be subject to the lower and coarser forms of examination and test? I know no reason why cerebral matter may not be eternal. I do not belong to those who take the material view of the mind; but I do not know that immortality is inconsistent even with materialism; and how much more easily may it be reconciled to the view of those who believe in the ineffable character, the imponderable, spiritual condition, of the soul!

In addition to these arguments, when we come to the Word of God, we hear the voices of those who sang and chanted in the past. We hear the disciple crying out, "Christ is risen!" and we hear the apostle preaching this new truth to mankind. So that now the heavens have been broken open. The secrets of the other life have been revealed. And is there not a presumption, following the line of a man's best manhood, that immortality is true? Does one need to go into a rigorous logical examination of this subject? Should one stand jealously at the side of the sepulcher of Christ, and examine this matter as a policeman examines the certificate of a suspected man, or as one takes money from the hand of a cheating usurer and goes out to see if it is gold? Shall one stand at the door from which issue all the hopes that belong to the best part of man; shall one look upon that which is demanded by the very nature of his better manhood, and question it coldly, and tread it under foot?

What do we gain by obliterating this fair vision? Why should not Heaven continue to shine on? Why should we not look into it, and believe that it is, and that it waits for us? Have we not the foretokens of it? Is not the analogy of the faculties one that leads us to believe that there is some such thing? Does not the nature of every man that is high and noble revolt at flesh and matter? Are they not rising toward the ineffable? Are not all the intuitions and affections of men such that, the better they are, the more they have of things that are manly, the more indispensable it is that they should have endurance, etherealization, perpetuation?

The heart and flesh cry out for God. They cry out for immortality. Not only does the Spirit from the heavenly land say to every toiling, yearning, anxious soul, "Come up hither," but every soul that is striving upward has in it, if not a vocalized aspiration, yet a mute yearning—a voice of the soul—that cries out for heaven.

"As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!"

On such a day as this, then, in a community of moral feeling, how blessed is the truth which comes to us, that we are not as the beasts that die; that we are as the gods that live! That for which we were made is immortality; and our journey is rough, straight, sharp, burdensome, with many tears. Our journey is not to the grave. *I* am not growing into old age to be blind, and to be deaf, and to be rheumatic, and to shrink a miserable cripple into the corner, shaking and tottering and forgetting all that *I* ever knew. The best part of me is untouched. *I* sit enshrined within the *me*. The soul; the reason; the moral sense; the power to think; the power to will; the power to love; the power to admire purity, and to reach out after it—that is not touched by time, though its instrument and means of outer demonstration be corroded and failing. No physical weakness touches the soul. Only the body is touched by sickness. And shake that down! shake it down! Let it go! For, as the chrysalis bursts open, and the covering which confines the perfected insect is dropped, that he may come out into brightness of form and largeness of life; so this body is but a chrysalis; and when we break through it, we rise on wings by the attraction of God, and by the propulsion of our own inevitable desire and need, and are forever with the Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

LIFT upon us, this morning, the light of thy countenance, brighter to our souls than the light of the sun traveling in the greatness of his strength—a light where our dark thoughts wander; a light where our footsteps of hope stumble; a light to those doubts and to those enshrouding fears which so often take possession of our souls and would lead them captive, yet wandering upon earth in their darkness. When we are nearest to that which is best within us, we have most faith of thee and of immortality. When we rebound to that which is lowest and which brings us to the soil and to the beast again, we are most beclouded and most in doubt.

Evermore, then, draw us near to our better selves, that out of these gracious affections we may discern clearly the truths of our salvation, that we may know more of thee, and be more sure that thou art, and that thou art near to every one who needs and seeks thee. Bring to us the assurance of that other life the glory of which transcends all thought or knowledge. For how are we perpetually at odds with this life! How we, when walking most firmly, perpetually stumble; and when most vigilant, lose our way: and when strongest, are overcome with sudden and unexpected weakness! We are children of darkness; and all marks of our rudeness and imperfection cling to us; and yet we are filled with half-sights. We have expectations and yearnings. We are strangely drawn away from our lower selves. We hear sounds articulate which we cannot put together, but which seem to syllable joy to us afar off. In some hours we do understand voices which speak to us. It is the Spirit and the Bride that say from off the heavenly battlements to our souls that are wandering, Come home! We do understand the yearnings when we seek again that which we have once loved with all our souls' immortality. Can it be gone forever from us? Do we not seek our children in such a way that we must find them? Do we not seek our companions, and all to whom we have given that which is best in our souls? And shall we not find them? Can it be that they have gone out, or that they have been extinguished, because they are no longer visible to these mortal senses, and because we cannot with these earthly bodies touch them? Are they gone from that which is purest, and highest, and serenest in us? Hast thou not given us a nature that speaks of heaven as well as a nature which touches the earth? Do we not discern by the higher life of our souls not only the things which to the senses are invisible, but the things which the intellect cannot reason about? O Lord our God, give strength to that which is God-like in us to-day, that we may mount up through all the realm of doubt, and through all the drudgery of the senses, and stand in the midst of the substantial blessings of those who are freed from the body, and have risen unto spiritual life, and spiritual promise, and are forever with the Lord. Blessed company! How large! swelling through the ages, more and more blessed in immortal experience. Into that great ocean flood we send rills from our hearts. There are our children. There are our parents. There are our brothers and sisters. There are those, called by earthly names, that have been dearest and nearest to us. And though, going, they left us in tears and in darkness, now how do they rain down joys upon us, and help us! With invisible hands of sweet affection, how are we lifted by them! How through memory are we brought very near to the throne by those whose going seemed our greatest loss and disaster! How are they fulfilling in us, through our yearnings and upward reaching, all the promises which thou didst make, in the sanctification of our sorrow, and our enfranchisement through it! Verily, by wounding us thou hast made us better. By pruning we have been made to bring forth

more fruit. That part which bore fruit of the flesh, thou art chastising. That part which would not bear fruit to hope, and faith, and love, thou art causing to be full of blossom and full of cluster.

We thank thee for all that invisible way and all that mystery of conduct by which our life has been blessed, and by which we have been exalted from our low and sordid conditions, into the realms of hope and expectation, which shall be unchanged, except that they shall be over-mastered and excelled by realization. We bless thee for all that we hope and expect of the heavenly land. We thank thee in behalf of those who have toiled through all the ages, and who have been comforted by the sweet dew which has fallen on them from above. How many have been outcast that could not have lived but for the hope of heaven! How many have walked through darkness, and persecution, and suffering, even unto blood, strengthened by the hope of heaven! How many are now in fastnesses, how many are bowed down, how many are mourning, bereaved, whose strength is in the expectancy of heaven! How many are there to-day who need thee, O Lord Jesus, risen, a token and pledge that they shall rise! If we, too, may break through all the encumbrances of life and ceremonies of death; if we, too, may rise because thou hast risen, and with irresistible power may call up to thee with the consciousness that we are thine, then what is there in life that we need to fear? What burden can be too heavy for the hand of God that is under us? What experience can be too quick for souls that are comforted by the Holy Ghost? What consolations can be withheld from those that are but a step from heaven? What sorrows can be unrelieved which are known to Christ, and which are felt by him in our behalf?

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to every one in thy presence such a nearness, to-day, of the heavenly influence, such a sense of the power of Christ's resurrection, such vehemence of hope, such gladness of faith, such love in our immortal part—in our soul-life—that all that is within us shall bless thy name. We take hold of thee, unknown, invisible, all-beloved Saviour. We do not understand what God is. We cannot throw the circuit of our thought around about the majesty of the universe. We cannot fill up the vast reach of infinite being. But out from the great unknown and invisible realm there comes to us the warmth, and the light, and the cheer of love. And we come back to see what it means in thy life and in thy words. We lift up those words and that life again, and enshrine them in our thought, in the heavenly realm. And thou dost interpret God to us. Thou art to us as the spring, with all its sweet sounds and budding promises to those who are weary of the winter. Thou art to us what the summer is to those that long for the summer.

O thou blessed, ever-rejoicing Christ! draw near to each one, this morning, in thy presence. Draw near to us, thy dear children. Cause the cup of our joy to overflow. Draw near to those who are afar from thee—who have forgotten their first love. Bring them back again with renewed consecration. Draw near to those who are pained and oppressed with burdens and sorrows. Let them know that there is emancipation, that there is yet glorious light and liberty, for them. Draw near to those who have had doubts and distressing fears, that their prison doors may be opened, and that they may be brought out by the Emancipator. Draw near to those who have been in the midst of sin, and under transgression, that they may know that there is a Heart that feels for them even in the seat of justice. O Lord Jesus, withhold not thy mercies from any this day. Be with those who are gathered in thine house, or who are confined at their own dwellings, or who wander at large without thought of God or thought of the sanctuary. Be with all thy children everywhere. Shine upon them, to-day, with thy Spirit. As the sun not only comes forth to those who are good

and just, but pours abroad everywhere his fullness of light and warmth, so shine thou with infinite fullness of mercy and of love upon the good and the bad; upon the just and the unjust; upon the righteous and the unrighteous; upon all who need thy saving power.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt accept our thanks for all the mercies which we have had as a church and people; for all the mercies of our households; for all the mercies of our personal lives.

We pray that thou wilt extend the same blessings which are ours to those who are without them. Spread abroad the new salvation of Jesus Christ to every part of this land, and of all lands. Gather in all nations. And at last may the whole earth see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praise evermore.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word which we have spoken. Lead us away from all doubt, from all fear, from all wandering anxieties, and from all the deadness of unbelief. Bring us, we pray thee, into the spring-tide of hope. May we stand in the midst of all our experiences, whether they be joys or griefs, to look away beyond the flood, beyond the setting of the sun, into the land of blessedness. How many await us there! By how many cords are we drawn!—but chiefly by the hope of seeing thee, O thou blessed Saviour, who for us hath tasted death! Drawn toward thee by all that in us is best, we wait for thine appearing. Grant, we pray thee, that thy blessings may fill us in all the hours of this day. And bless all thy people of every name. May grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied to them all. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. *Amen.*



THE SOUL'S VICTORY.

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"—**1 JOHN v. 4, 5.**

The victories which human histories celebrate will all die out in the course of time, and be nowhere found in the memory; while those silent conflicts, and those victories without glory that are taking place continually, in our midst and all around about us, will shine out and have their celebration. The whole heavens of the future will be filled with pæans and triumphant songs of those who have gained immortal victories.

This victory is not simply the final one (though that will be held in pre-eminence—the great transition period by which we ascend from time and limitation into the infinite, the eternal); but there is going on evermore a conflict in all those that are truly touched by the Spirit of Christ; and they are the subjects of victory. For victories do not take place by one shock or overthrow; they are gained little by little through a long period.

The soul is not in the ascendant by nature. It has to conquer the place for which it was made. If we read and accept the apostle's philosophy—and it is substantially the true one (the facts, of course, are true, but the phraseology would almost suit the nomenclature of our day: this is especially so where he divides man in two)—then there is a dual man. There is the man of the flesh, and the man of the spirit. The man of the flesh is like all animal creatures. The man of the spirit is something superinduced above that—higher than that. As in the true animal there is no soul, no intellect, that by education can ever come into ascendancy; so, on the other hand, men have an animal nature upon which have been built faculties that are susceptible of endless expansion. These faculties are dominant—not in fact, but in design.

Now, men are not born into life with the spiritual nature, the faculties of the higher manhood, pre-eminent. They come to that state by the lessons of life in the great school and battle of this world. In the beginning, in our nascent states, our happiness depends on the favorable relation of things about us to our sense of happiness. When children, we are dependent upon our parents for thought, for instruction, for feeling. We are not in such a state that we can supply ourselves with these things. But it is designed that when we come to manhood the soul shall become so strong as to be able to dominate. It is not designed that the lower passions and faculties, that the physical elements, shall dominate. It is designed that a man shall be sufficient for himself; that he shall be victorious over all that is within him, and over all the influences that surround him, so that he shall be a light-bearer, a joy-producer. The divine thought in the creation of man's nature is transcendently glorious; but he does not come to his highest condition at first: he comes to it only through strife and struggle. When he comes to it, however, he finds in himself sufficiency; he is strong enough for himself; he is strong enough to overcome everything that is in his way. Not that outward things alone augment happiness, but that men may come to that state, that richness of thought and feeling, that soul-force, that luminousness which can control their outward circumstances, so that they shall be clear-thinking, full of faith and its inspiration, full of hope, full of attainment, full of conscious power, quite independent of their surroundings.

Life begins in such conditions that we require circumstances to nourish us in order that we may hope; but it is possible for life to be carried forward in such a way that a man may stand up strong, contented, glorious in his experience, in spite of his circumstances—in their face and teeth.

Now, this state of mind is not one which we can come to by reason, nor by volition, nor by any strength that is in us. This idea of dominion comes by faith in Christ. When the superior faculties in men are leavened and strengthened and developed by the indwelling of the divine soul, then they become creatures so different from their natural state that they have the power of breeding their own comfort and their own happiness, independent of any other source except God.

This is a teaching which is found throughout the New Testament. Nowhere is it more significant than in the teaching of our Saviour, when he says, "Without me ye can do nothing;" and yet without him they could do a great many things. They could eat;

they could drink; they could walk; they could buy farms; they could reap harvests; they could sail ships; they could contend with men; they could go through all the diversified experiences of human society. But he was speaking, not of their lower manhood, but of their higher and spiritual manhood; and without him, in their loftier sphere, where true manhood dwells, they could do nothing. For the power of the soul is in its inspiration. It is in the indwelling of God, which works through the nature that he has given to man. It is from the consciousness of God in you, it is from this Christ in you, the hope of glory, that you obtain that power of which I have been speaking; that victory by which man is conqueror over everything which is in him, and everything which is around about him; so that, light or dark, joy or woe, prosperity or adversity, is alike to him; so that he is adequate to his own circumstances, and dominates them, whatever they may be.

Out of the feeling that Christ loves us, and that we love him, springs this experience. We have, in a certain way, experiences of this kind in lower spheres, to which I shall allude by-and-by; but now, before going into these analogies, I point to the teachings of Scripture in regard to a manhood which is to be developed by those who are followers of Christ, but to which no ordinary experience of Christians answers. There is a certain type of experience set forth in the New Testament which is not reproduced very generally. There are joys promised which men do not usually find when they become Christians. There is a self-sufficiency of one's nature (not in the ignoble but in the higher sense of the term); there is an inward power, which has been promised to men but which they do not usually find in their Christian life. And so there is a great deal of disappointment. For men suppose that when they obtain religion, they obtain it in some such way as one obtains property, when his father dies and leaves him an estate. They suppose that they have it in its entirety, already earned. Men think that religion is of such a nature that when it comes to them it is like the picture which a man obtains when he stands before the open camera, and the operator draws forth the plate. They imagine that when they become Christians they are complete. Men have the impression that when the divine Spirit comes into one's soul, the lineaments of God are stamped on him, and that thenceforward he is in the fullness of his enjoyment.

Now there are no extravagant words here. There is competency in the soul to produce all those clustering joys which are set forth in the Scriptures. But they do not come suddenly. They do not come all the time. They are involved by processes which reach

on through the years, and which multiply conflicts. They are the results of victories. They are final results. There are various intermediate points of achievement all along the line of Christian experience, but he who has entered into the secret of God's love through Jesus Christ; he who feels that God loves him; he who has been taken possession of by that great feeling; he who, feeling what power, what depth, what richness, what infinitude there must be in the act of divine love, yet believes that God loves him—he has reached the victorious period in which the soul stands as if it were conscious of immortality.

Suppose a snowdrop standing in the early spring should be conscious; what would it think if it were told that the sun, traveling in the greatness of its strength, had elected it, and was pouring abroad its warmth and light for it; that it was a child of the sun, though it seemed to be born in the snow; that it was a child of light and warmth, though it was seemingly perishable and comparatively helpless; that it was sun-loved and sun-born and sun-perfected, though it was so frail and so apparently worthless? And how does the soul, helped by a thousand analogies, look up at the thought of an Infinite Lover, from eternity to eternity filling the chanting heavens, and yet bending down, and saying to every one, "Thee have I chosen. Thou art mine. I have drawn thy portrait upon the palm of my hand. Thou art dear to me as the apple of my eye. Having loved my own, I loved them unto the end!"

These words, by frequent use, grow threadbare, and carry very little meaning in them; but when one can bring himself under the focal point of such a thought as that the soul is beloved of God—beloved, not on condition, not on account of purity, but in order that it may grow pure; when one can live in the thought of his election through Jesus Christ into the fellowship of the Spirit of God, then there comes to his soul out of that consciousness a strength which lifts him above ten thousand infelicities of life. All that is necessary to make the common troubles of life as nothing to you, is the inspiration of some such great thought.

If you are traveling lazily, and some clumsy passenger sets his carpet-bag down so that it grazes you, scratches your skin, and causes you pain, you very likely say, "Blockhead! Can't see! Ought to have a man go with him to take care of him!" When you are in a quiet, listless state, small things disturb your peace. But suppose a man is rescuing his child from a conflagration? Suppose the house is on fire, and his whole soul is kindled by affection, and he is dashing here and there without regard to his own comfort or safety? It will not be until hours afterwards, that he

finds out that his hand is gashed, or that his foot is bruised. He goes through fire and water, and over wood and stone, and is unconscious of the contact. Under the inspiration of a noble feeling, troubles and sufferings are forgotten, and outward things almost cease to have power over men.

Persons may do such things and have such experiences in the height of danger, or in a moment of noble aspiration; but something higher must be arrived at by education, if men are to be brought into a constancy of the realization of God's presence with them—and this may take place. Men may come into a state in which the forces of outward life shall seem to them infinitely inferior, and in which their happiness shall in no wise depend on them. They may enjoy them, and yet not be dependent on them for peace, for hope, for love, for gladness, or for satisfaction.

It is not necessary to be rich in order to be happy, though riches may make a man more happy. It is not necessary to be honored in order to be happy, although honors may bring happiness. There is a state of mind which lifts a man above such things.

I may walk through the garden of a friend, and may be charmed with it, and may pluck a flower here and a flower there; but I shall not depend for happiness on that garden. I go away and immediately forget about it. It served me for a moment, but I am not tied down to it. A man may find it pleasant to have an easy-chair, and sit in a sunny corner, or be sheltered from the rude sun or the boisterous wind; this may be agreeable to him; but when he is under a higher impulse, he does not think of such things. When a man is in the sphere of his lower manhood, he cries and howls and pines, and wants this, and wants that, and is hungry, and thirsty, and sleepy; but when he is in the realm of his higher manhood, he is neither hungry nor thirsty nor sleepy. The higher life dominates the lower life. The latter is in the power of the former. And this higher life is kindled in us by divine love. It is by our consciousness of being beloved of God that we are lifted above the ordinary conditions of life, and are made independent of them.

Have there never been days when you could not even feel the ground under your feet? Have there never been days in which you did not know whether there was such a thing as sun, or moon, or star? Have there never been days in which you could not say whether you were in the body or out of it? Have there not been such overtures and intimations of the potency and royalty and victory of the higher manhood over the lower one as gave you a real faith in these representations of the Word of God?

This is our victory; this is our faith. Who overcomes the

world but he that believes in the Lord Jesus Christ? And when one believes in Christ; when he believes that God is a God of love, and a God of love to us, and that in his hands are all things—providences, the course of time, the whole tract of the future endless life, as well as that of the present life, all things to all; when one believes in this, not as a dry preceptual teaching, but as a realization, how is he lifted above his outward circumstances! How little hold has the world upon him! When one can truly enter upon this life of faith in Christ Jesus, he is independent of his external surroundings.

This is what I suppose the text fully to mean.

“For whosoever [or whatsoever] is born of God, overcometh the world.”

In the lower sense, he overcomes its temptations, its snares, its allurements, that lead him downward to sin; but in the higher sense he overcomes it so that it is not his master, but he is its. The world is his beneficiary: he is not its. He overcomes it so that he has a victory over it in every sense.

“And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

And what is this faith?

“Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God.”

I remark after this exposition, first, that the act of conversion which the Church teaches, and which is so abundantly set forth, is merely the act of beginning a higher spiritual life. It is an act by which a man comes under the banner of a spiritual Leader, and enters upon a campaign. Or, to change the figure, the new birth of the soul, or of the higher manhood, in man, may be said to be something like the birth of a man into this outward life. It is a very joyful thing in a household to say that a son is born; and yet, any contemplative person, who has had any taste of what life is in reality, must have with the high lights very deep shadows. Thank God, we are not obliged to think of everything that might be thought of. To see what a boy must meet and encounter—what temptations; what allurements; what seductions; what burdens; what disappointments; what embitterments—to look through his whole career, and see these things which must confront him as he goes out and enters upon the great prairie of life, brings sadness to the heart. To think of your boy, who, by-and-by, will be out from under your hand; whom you cannot follow as he goes forth into life; and who, it may be, you will not meet again until all is settled, and you and he are on the other side—this is painful. There are a great many serious things which stand connected with the joy of the cradle.

On the other hand, there are many anxious thoughts suggested in standing by the side of the cradle of a girl, on whom come so many burdens that do not touch the outward shoulder, but only the inward sensibility, and for whom that strange, that hidden, that mystic web of life is woven. That this little child, helpless, pining, crying, is yet to grow up through girlhood into womanhood, and to motherhood, and meet a thousand bitter troubles and burdens within and without; that this little pilgrim, now lying wrapped unconsciously and comfortably, is to weep and have sorrows for which there are no tears (there are sorrows which are so deep that no line can go down to bring up the waters that lie at the bottom)—this is a sad thought.

You can make it as sad as you have a mind to, when a child is born, by thinking of these things. You do not need to think of them; you may look on the hopeful side; but they are there.

Now, when a man is born into the kingdom of God, there is a paean in the Church. Everybody rejoices. *I* rejoice over a man who has been living on a lower plane of life, when I understand that the Spirit of God has called him, and he is born again, and has a conception of the higher and nobler life of Christian manhood, in distinction from the fleshly life of the lower manhood. Sometimes when a man comes into the Christian fold, we dress the church with flowers—and this is all very well. We rejoice over him—and this is very well. We give him a start in the Christian life and communion, and then go on to think of others, as if our duty was done respecting him, and his case was settled. But a man is not made as a seal is. You take the wax, and melt it, and put it on the letter or paper, and stamp it with the seal; and when you take the seal off, there is the stamp, clear cut. It is there once and forever. But no man is made a Christian once and forever. There is no seal that stamps a man so that he bears the likeness of God at once, clear, sharp, and perfected. A man is born into his second manhood as he is into his first, with all its findings-out before him; with all its mistakes; with all its sorrows and troubles. He is to go through a spiritual experience which is not unaptly parallel to that of his physical manhood. There is no error greater than that of supposing that when a man is once converted and brought into the Church he is safe. You might as well say that when a man has planted his seed it is all right, and there is nothing more to be done. It is a good thing for seed to be planted; but when it has come up, the farmer must nourish it, and defend it from a thousand enemies, and wait through the seasons for it to grow to its final form and fruit. They who begin a reli-

gious life, begin a warfare which has subsidiary victories, installments of success, but whose final, crowning victory will not be attained for years to come. Some people, I think, come to their victory before they die—or else why are they so peaceful, so joyful, so sweet, so rich and pleasant in the household, diffusing wherever they are the sense of a higher spiritual manhood? Doubtless some do have their victory before they get through with this life; but some, evidently, if they have a victory at all must get it on the other side—for they do not get it on this. At any rate, while we are to have, in a grand sense, a victory over all things by faith in the love and power of Jesus Christ, we are to come to it by struggle. We did not inherit that tendency. It is to be acquired. And it is to come by installments. The beginnings of it we may see in this world, though the end is too glorious for the present life.

So that, the Christian man, having begun to follow Christ, may have some joy, some light, some fruition, as he goes along. Education is now so broad in religious things, that when men are born into Christianity they are born a hundred years old compared with those that are born out of heathenism. The first stages of their experience may be very joyful. But it is not what a man feels of joy, it is not the pleasurable emotion which he has, that indicates the strength of his enjoyment. For I know that a man, without excitement, without excess of feeling, without experiencing the violence, the sharp and fiery edge of common enjoyment, may have a deep sense of the goodness and mercy of God in his soul, and may carry it with him from day to day, so that it shall make him almost indifferent to praise or blame, to hardness or softness, to abundance or scarcity, or anything else. In the life of the lower manhood we are subject to all those vexations which come from our passions and appetites; but there is such a thing as rising into the higher life where we shall be set free from all these things.

When our fathers were surrounded by the Indians, they built their houses with two stories. The upper story was fortified so that if they were assailed they could go up into it, and draw the ladder after them, and shut the trap-door, and thus escape harm. This was a fort, as it were, in which no arrow could reach them, and they were safe.

So men, in rearing their soul-dwelling, build with two stories; and if one knows how to go up from the lower or ground-floor to the upper one and draw the ladder after him, he is in a tower, above things that would otherwise harass and vex him.

The power of Christ in you, I remark secondly, is to all intents and purposes all that you will ever have of the divinity of the

Lord Jesus Christ. I do not mean to say that there is no other evidence of Christ's divinity; but I do mean to say that I think the nature of God is such that we cannot compass the notion of divinity by converting it into the form of ideas. I think the divine nature is unconvertible in those parts which are richest and most soul-satisfying. And I think that the mere external relationships of Christ to his Father, and the ciphering out of the mere notion of moral government, the dynastic question of the divinity of Christ, has been pressed at times, not too much, not as a thing unreal, perhaps, but as a thing disproportioned. My Christ is divine when he is in me the hope of glory. Nor can I form so high a conception of the potency of Jesus Christ at any other time as when I am consciously borne up by his inspiration into emotions and apprehensions of a victorious future. I never come to my best view of the divine nature through the instrumentality of the faculties of my mind. It is when I am caught by the efflux of God's Spirit, and lifted into regions above the senses, that I have such a thought of divinity as I get under no other circumstances.

An adhesion to the outward *notion* of the divinity of Christ may be idolatrous. That is to say, as a man's conceptions of divinity are only relative and proximate, they are seldom true. So there may be errors in our views of Christ, and thus we may make them idols. Whereas, the *sense* of the divinity of Christ is not convertible into ideas. He is a God of love; and where a conception of this truth is poured in upon the soul, such is its luminousness that it has power over itself, over the body, and over men around about it, and is able to disenchant its surroundings, to break their snares, and to make them indifferent to it. This truth has power to render a man sensitive to all that is good in his fellow-men; it has power to redeem him from the fear of death; and it has power to make him, in the midst of his adversity, bright as a star in the night.

This is the witness of the power of God in a man. It is to him the evidence of the divinity of Christ; and it is above every other conception of the divine nature. It is more satisfying and convincing than any other.

It sometimes happens that royalty is exiled. Louis Phillippe, you know, was an exile in America, and taught school here. And suppose I were going to school to a person whose knowledge and nobleness were such as to give me a new conception of being? Suppose that as he taught me athletic and other exercises, I found his influence such that I was ashamed to be bad in his presence? Suppose I found that every spring and sentiment of honor in me

was touched by his example? Suppose I found that he took kindly to me, and manifested a deep interest in my welfare? And suppose, at last, it began to be whispered to me, "Do you know who your master is?" Yes, I know who he is. I am thinking of him as *what* he is; and that, to me, determines *who* he is. But it is said to me, "He is a monarch in disguise." I am told that he is the heir-apparent to the crown of France. And I am shown, as testimonies of his identity, armorial bearings, pedigrees, and titles, by which he can claim the French throne. And suppose, instead of judging by my personal association with him, I should give myself to studying these armorial bearings? Suppose I should go to the heraldry office (we have one in New York) and find out all his insignia? Suppose I should study helms, shields, and all manner of trappings like these, and should almost forget him in looking into the outward signs of his royalty? Would that be wise?

Here are men who are piling up text after text, and argument after argument, to prove that Christ is equal with God. To me the evidence is in the fact that he loves me, and makes me feel as if I, too, were of God. He awakens divinity in me.

Why am I able to bear pain, and smile at the same time? For a while I can do it, because I have natural fortitude; but who can bear pain, and severe pain at that, through days, and weeks, and months, and yet smile? He in whose soul Christ dwells. When riches have so many powers, when they are a golden key that unlocks so many treasures of comfort, and taste and benevolence, why is it that one may be free from their dominion? What is it that enables one to stand up in the hour of overthrow and poverty, and say, "Riches were good when I had them, and they are just as good now that I have lost them"? What is it that enables one to say this when he is stripped of all earthly possessions, not with the lip quivering, because he ought to say it, but royally, living accordingly all the time? It is the eternal power of God, it is the love of Jesus Christ, in a man, that gives him such a sense of the transcendent superiority of the divine life, and of the nobility of the eternal future, and of the soul's coronation, which is unspeakably more precious than earthly treasures can be—it is these things that awaken in him that which enables him to get the victory. How can one give up all that there is in friendship and love, and sit solitary in life, while plow-marks are made upon that brow where God is ripping furrows open, and is sowing seeds of suffering and distress? And how can he, under such circumstances, be like the setting sun that casts its glory over the landscape? By having God manifested in him. How can one give life to one, to two, to three

to five, to seven children, and, when they fall on the right and on the left, and when those things about which every fiber of his affection has twined are taken away, and he is left desolate, how can she be full of joy, and sing like a bird, and chant like a band of music? How shall one do those things which are against nature and above nature, except by the indwelling spirit of love in Christ, which makes one superior to the lower life, and gives to the soul its proper ascendancy, and makes it adequate to all circumstances? Such is the victory of a soul in Christ over its outward conditions.

I know that men will say, "This is transcendental; this is imagination; this is very well for poetry; it will probably light up the idea; but I think, Mr. Beecher, you like a good bed and a good dinner as well as anybody else; and I presume that when you get through preaching you will go back to common life and enjoy its comforts as well as anybody else." Yes, I am just as weak and foolish as you are. It is true of me and it is true of you, that we are more or less under the dominion of the senses; and it is true of us because we have not come to that perfection which the Spirit gives. For the soul was meant not to be in bondage to appetites, and fleshly lusts, and physical conditions. The body is in bondage to these things, but the soul is more than the body. If you had risen to the fullness that is reserved for you, and that shall be revealed to you yet one day hereafter; if you had risen to that sphere toward which you are being drawn by ten thousand influences, *neither height, nor depth, nor length, nor breadth, nor any other creature, would be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.* And when one is in the tide of love, and he knows its rapture and inspiration, the world has nothing else to give, and can take away nothing that his soul needs.

A man's spirit, then, when it is truly filled with the Lord Jesus Christ's love, with the hope of future blessedness, and with a sense of the dignity which belongs to it, is like a lamp.

A cold firebrand and a burning lamp started out, one day, to see what they could find. The firebrand came back and wrote in its journal that the whole world was dark. It did not find a place, wherever it went, in which there was light. Everywhere was darkness. The lamp, when it came back, wrote in its journal, "Wherever I went it was light. I did not find any darkness in my journey. The whole world was light." What was the difference? The lamp carried light with it, and when it went abroad it illumined everything about it. The dead firebrand carried no light, and it found none where it went.

It is in the power of the soul to carry its light with it. Are you hedged in on every side? You have the power, if you know how to use it, of making your circumstances pleasant. Are those fountains from which you have been wont to derive comfort stopped up? You do not need them. You can develop fountains of comfort in yourselves. Is your nature arid and dry? Then there is an eternal Fountain. You are a son of God; you are an heir of immortality. You have a manhood that is yet to be associated with the angels. All the possibilities that can be conceived by a sanctified imagination center in you. And you ought to be victorious over all external things. Where should a man go that he should not be happy? "All things work together for good," we are told. Men stop there; but to whom do all things work together for good?

"All things work together for good to them that love God."

You know how it is with the early loves of men. In the first fruition, when love dawns in its purity; when it kindles the imagination; when it awakens the soul's most disinterested sympathies, what luminousness there is in it! and under it what patience, what correction of faults! True love sings, always, and tries to make happy the object loved. True love embellishes that which it loves.

The first forms of love, even, reach up toward divinity. The inspirations of love lift men heavenward, where God is, from whom all true love comes. And as it is in our lower relations; as we have such fountains of joy springing from our love of those who are here on earth, what must be the power of happiness in that soul which has God for the object of its love! How it carries burdens and troubles as if they were unworthy of notice!

We are not, therefore, to suppose that men are to be either happy or unhappy according to their outward condition. I have no doubt that if we were to go through the community we should find many happy persons who are prospered. I have no doubt that there are many persons who have built up an outward estate which brings them happiness. It may be that the two things are co-incident, and that men have happiness both in the outward, physical conditions, and in the inward, spiritual conditions of life. For I believe it is possible for a man to be rich, and yet enter the kingdom of heaven. Christ did not say that the rich could not do it. He merely said, "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." How hard it is some of you know; but it is possible. Therefore men may have all that can be given to them by their social surroundings, all that wealth can minister, all that fame can bestow; and yet, transcendently above that, they may have

the superior bliss which comes from faith in the love of God and the divine Spirit.

But then, on the other hand, there are many persons who are supremely happy in life, though they have none of these surroundings. I have seen them; I have known them; and so have you, many of them. I doubt, if you were to think through all your village life, through all your life in the city, through all your earlier and later life, and you were to pick out six persons whom you think to have been the happiest persons you ever met, whether, on the whole, five of them would not be persons that were not very eminent in the outward circumstances of their life. When I go back to my boyhood, I remember a black man that I thought to be the happiest person I knew. I used to work in the field with him. I used to sleep in the same room with him—he would not let me sleep in the same bed with him; and I think he was the happiest, most singing creature that I met with in my childhood. And if you go back in memory, and recall those who, of all persons that you ever knew, impressed you as being on the whole the happiest, I think you will find that they were not the persons who were the most prosperous, or who had the most honor. I think you will find them largely among those who had no great weight or stature in this world, but who had the grace of God in their hearts, and rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I sometimes think of a Christian heart as of the inside of a cottage on the sea-coast, with mountains coming down behind, and the storm breaking overhead, and the waves thundering upon the shore, and the trees groaning and sighing in the wilderness around, and the rains descending and beating upon the windows, when all the convulsion outside—the darkness, the midnight, the waves, the tempest, and the scowling sky, made the brightness of the hearth more bright, and the burning fire more pleasant, and the happy circle around about it more joyful and blissful. I have seen souls whose peace-chamber within was ample, into which they retreated from the strife of tongues, from the pursuit of envy and jealousy, and from all great worldly strifes and ambitions; and there, by as much as around about them were night and storm and tempest, by so much they found tranquillity and security and blessed peace.

This is the portion of those who love God—*peace*. You remember how, before that august experience of our Master, on the eve of his wondrous suffering, as he sat in loving conversation with his disciples, in one of those matchless discourses which preceded his death, he said to them, although he was under the very impending

cloud, and knew it was close at hand, and understood the mystery of that world-suffering upon which he was about to enter, "Peace I give to you—my peace." Oh! what a peace that must have been, with such environments, when there was nothing in the natural world to hold him, as it poured out to them from his overflowing heart!

All these views are consistent, as I have said, with the fact of transient trouble. The fact that there is night does not take away from our sense of the joyousness of the day. The fact that there are storms in summer, takes away nothing from our sense of the depth and richness of summer. If there were no storms, there could be no rainbow. And so, in our experience in this life, it is not necessary that every instant should be one flashing with the keen edge of sensuous enjoyment. A picture is never perfect without lights and shadows both; and that experience is best which has alternations of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, trouble and peace. These alternations are not signs that one is not victorious over his circumstances. Our vision may for the hour or the day be limited by physical strifes; the picture for the time may be dim; and we are to judge of the fulfillment of the promises of Christ, and of our attainments in the Christian life, not by single passages, but by the average rate at which we are going. There may be some whose life is not yet triumphant, but who will triumph by-and-by.

It is, then, in the direction of the Lord Jesus Christ, of his indwelling influence, and of his power to lift us into our higher manhood, and into ascendancy over the natural man—it is in this direction that I point you for your joy in life. Live not as if you thought you should always dwell here. Live not as if this were your mansion. Live not as if your treasures were upon earth. Do not consider yourselves really great and happy because you are great and happy in your lower manhood. Judge your greatness and happiness by the grace of soul you have; by your faith in Christ; by the dominance of love; and by the fruits of these things—joy, peace, long-suffering, and endurance unto the end.

To all those who sit in darkness and trouble, my message this morning is, "There is light for you"; to all those who are imprisoned in difficulties, "There is a Deliverer for you"; to all those who are disappointed, "There is endless fruition for you." And to all those who are prepared to accept it, I say, "There is victory for you in Jesus Christ. Your faith in him will lift you above time, and bring you to the full satisfaction and blessedness of those who see him as he is, and are like him."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rise, our Father, this morning, by thy gracious help, into that crystalline sphere above us and around us, where are going on transcendent things, far beyond the experience of our life or our knowledge; where love prevails; where are all those who have reached their heavenly estate; where thou art; where thou art bringing to thyself innumerable saints that have finished their course, and are rising to glory.

We believe that thou art, and that thou art transcendently greater and better than the utmost conceptions of goodness and greatness which we can form. We shall not be disappointed. We shall not find the majesty of love to be less than we thought. Thou art better than our best thoughts of thee. Thou art nobler than our noblest conceptions make thee to be. We shall be satisfied when we shall have received our other nature and life; when we shall be disencumbered, translated, victorious over every ill of which but the memory shall remain. We shall be satisfied when ages have rolled away. Far beyond the flight of thought, in the distant cycles, we shall be satisfied. We shall be filled; and yet forever seeking as if we were hungry. We shall be full of joy; and yet forever reaching out for new clusters.

We rejoice, O Lord, that thou hast given us the intimation and the revelation of thyself. We rejoice that in thy Word stand recorded the victories of the future; our entrance into the city of the blessed—into the unknown sphere where thou dwellest. We rejoice that in the midst of all our discouragements we have this to cheer us: that there is a sun which never goes down; that there is a place where noon dwells forever more; that there is a city where there is no darkness, where there are no troubles, where there are no defeats, where there is no wasting, and where there is no loss. We believe that by the might of the power of God we shall be kept, and that Christ shall be made unto us all that which we lack in our own selves. We believe that our heritage is God; and that we are to be filled with all the fullness of God; and that we are to be made partakers of his holiness.

And now we desire, O Lord our God, to accept the gift of life here, and all its occupations, in the spirit of this truth. We desire to feel that this is the school where thou hast placed us; that these are the grounds wherein thou art preparing us for that victorious state which lies but just beyond. Give us faith to discern the meanings of this outward life. Give us strength to forget the bondage of these lower conditions. Fill us with that inspiration, with that divine hope, with that love, with that secret power by which we may rise up into the true manhood of the soul, and there commune with thee, and find ourselves, not only in the light, but with light enough to throw out upon the dark places where our feet do carry us. We pray that we may not only have strength within, but overflowing strength, that others may be blessed therein, so that being children of the light, we may carry light to the dark; that being saved by hope, our hope may be the hope of others; that we may have that faith which they have whose Captain is Christ, and whose Leader is God.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt give us a more full and clear understanding of that for which we were born, that we may aspire after it; that we may reach out toward it; that we may not be satisfied with the outward, and lower, and perishing things in this world. Taking gratefully all those things which thou hast vouchsafed to our lower life, may we rise to the higher and nobler enjoyments of the spirit. May we have the experiences of righteousness, and joy, and love, and peace.

We pray for the troubled this morning. We pray for all that are anx-

ious. We pray for all that are weary of watching. We pray for all those that are perpetually turning their thoughts in upon themselves, and who find much to blame, and little for comfort. We pray for those who are discouraged. We pray for those who see no future opening for their footsteps. We pray for all who are burdened with the responsibilities which they know not how to bear. We pray for those who, from hope deferred, are heartsick. We pray for the homesick. We pray for all those whose life and friendship and love have been blighted. We pray for all those who seem to themselves cut away from the root on which they grew, and drifting to the sea, cheerless and tempest-tossed. We pray for those who do not pray for themselves. We pray for children who have forgotten their parents' teaching and example and prayer. We pray for all that thou art looking upon in this congregation, and beseech of thee that thou wilt bless them according to their necessities. Draw near to fulfill our desire in making every one know that thou art knocking at the door, and that thou art calling each one by name.

If there be any who mourn in grief, may they bring out their dead, their sick, their afflicted ones from their soul-house, that Jesus, passing by, may heal them, and give back to them life and health.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt fulfill, this morning, in some wise, those gracious words of promise which were fulfilled in thy servants of old, which have been fulfilled in every age since, and of whose fulfillment there are so many witnesses in our day. May all that are in thy presence here have reason to testify of the goodness of God to their souls from day to day. Oh! grant, this morning, that the robe of darkness may be thrown off from eyes that fain would see thee. Lift thou thyself up to the faith of those who are dying for need of thee. How many are not happy! How many are surrounded by a thousand things that they thought would bring them happiness, but whose clasp brings them nothing but momentary satisfaction, and then weariness! How many still pine unsatisfied! How many, having drunk, are thirsty! How many, having eaten, are hungry! How many, having slept, yearn for sleep again! Are there not those who say, in the morning, "Would God it were evening," and in the evening, "Would God it were morning?" O thou Deliverer! wilt thou look upon all the trouble and suffering which thou seest among men unmoved? Thou that didst look upon thy mother in thine anguish, are there not mothers that stand before thee upon whom thou canst look? Thou who didst make haste in going to him who was cast out from the synagogue, though he knew thee not in his loneliness, to comfort him, wilt thou not look upon those who stand uncomforted, and have no faith in thee. Have compassion upon those before thee who are trying to compass their own happiness by means of things which belong to physical life, and give them a horizon which is larger than any that they have had—even the whole eternal heaven.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant, this morning, that thy grace and mercy and peace may abound in every heart before thee, conscious or unconscious of its want. Grant, we pray thee, that thy Gospel may be a strengthening and comforting bread indeed from heaven for thy children. May it be to each one as a leaf from the tree of life, full of healing, and with something of that fruit which bears in it immortality.

We pray that thou wilt prepare us for the duties of the week; for a nobler aspiration; for more attainment. And may we not be discouraged, even when we are cast down; for we are not destroyed when we are cast down. We are not neglected nor forgotten because we are in darkness. We pray for faith, for inspiration, for peace even in suffering. We pray for the beginning of that victory which shall yet crown us in thy kingdom.

Bless, we pray thee, those who are endeavoring to teach—all parents, with their little church at home; all teachers in Bible-classes and in Sabbath-

schools. We pray that they themselves may be so comforted and assured from thy Word, that teaching others shall be a perpetual fruition to them. May those who bear the Gospel to the neglected, and to those who are in prison, and to the sick, be themselves greatly cheered by the accompanying presence of the divine Spirit.

We pray for all those who are outcast—for all those who stand outside of that pale of blessings within which we are made so comfortable. We pray for the poor, and the untaught, and the wandering. We pray for the children of vice and of crime. We beseech of thee that thy Spirit may be more and more infused into those who are around about them, and that many may be snatched as brands from the burning.

We pray for the truth of Christ, this day, that it may be preached in all the churches. We thank thee that there are so many that are known of thee, and that are preaching thy name in thy spirit. We pray that thou wilt help those who are tempted and tormented with ambition, with pride, with vanity, and with self-seeking, though mainly they seek to build up the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. Help their faults, that they may grow less, and their virtues, that they may grow more eminent. May they have less of human feeling, and more of the sweetness and blessedness of the divine temper. May the truth, as well as all excellences, in all faithfulness be proclaimed everywhere, and sent home to men's consciences; and may men speak the truth in love, all working together with a common aim. May they all clasp hands, and press toward one blessed center, seeking to strengthen, and not to weaken nor hinder each other.

Bless the cause of education. May schools, and colleges, and all institutions for the diffusion of intelligence prosper.

We pray for the nations of the earth, that they may learn war no more; that they may more and more learn peace, and strength, and riches, and glory in Christ Jesus.

Look with compassion upon all those who are scattered abroad throughout this land. Remember the children of the forest, that are given up so much to animalism, and are so much tempted to wickedness in their own dark and untaught natures. We pray for the *remnant*, that they may be saved. We pray that thou wilt be gracious in all those regions around about where savage fury reigns; where homes are desolated; where the poor and innocent are slaughtered, and where some are left to mourn. Cut short, we pray thee, these days of darkness and trouble, and bring in the days of security and peace. We pray that the beneficent policy of this Government, while it chastises disobedience of law, may more and more win to peace and security, by fidelity to treaties, by the fulfilment of all promises made, and by a heart-humanity which shall not perish on its way to those who need it. We pray that thou wilt deliver those who are weak from the hands of the greedy, the covetous, and the destroying. Give those who are to remain in thine inscrutable providence abiding places, that they may learn the ways of civilization and true Christianity, and that they may be preserved rather than destroyed.

Look thou upon all the outcast and scattered throughout the world. O Lord, what blood must flow! What mournful dirges are to be chanted! How sad is the requiem of time! How the world, as it moves in its sphere, is filled with the echoes of sorrow and sighing! Creation has been groaning and travailling in pain until now. When shall the day of redemption come? When shall thy purposes be fulfilled? When shall the cup that is full of bitterness be drained and cast away, to be followed by joy? Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And to thy name shall be all the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, wilt thou bless the word spoken, and grant that it may do good to those who have listened to it. Comfort those who are in grief. Inspire those who are lagging. Grant that we may all be enlightened and refreshed by the thought of God for us, and by the presence and power of God within us. Enkindle that heroism which is from thee in our souls. Grant that we may be full of sweetness, and patience, and gentleness. Grant that in the midst of turmoil we may have silence and solitude. May we have a garden of Gethsemane where we may get away from the noisy, distracting city, where the angels may visit us, and we may find peace. Grant that in all circumstances we may cling to our manhood in Christ Jesus. May we not be subject to base motives. May we that are sons of God, and that are on our way to our Father's house, not be willing to go into captivity. May we live according to the dictates of our higher nature. May men hear our voices, and be guided by us through the night, and follow us when at last we shall go down to cross the river through the valley and shadow of death. And when the eye can follow us no longer, and the hand shall let go, may our voices still be heard on the other side, till we reach the shore. And then, if it is lost, may it be in the triumph of those who receive us, to give us an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Father. And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

THE NARROW WAY; THE LIGHT BURDEN.

"Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek, and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."—Matt. xi. 28-30.

At the time that our Saviour was upon earth, the Jewish people had come to about the lowest condition into which, while they yet retained their national existence, they had ever fallen. If there was an irruption into any part of the East, you may be sure that the armies moved through Palestine. And whatever army moved through Palestine, what with the rapine and destruction, and what with the dregs that were left behind, the land was filled with bad men. The north of Galilee represented, in its population, something of almost every one of the Mediterranean nations; and the Gentiles and Jews were mixed together, much to the disgust of the Pharisaic Jews, who were proud of the purity of their blood, and the unmixed character of their population.

Even in Judæa the Roman hand was heavy. Nor was the Roman soldier absent either from their dwellings or their temples. If they were not permitted to enter into the sacred courts, they overlooked everything, and dominated from the tower of Antonia down; and the whole land was swept by war as with a flame. Or, if it was a time of peace, it was continually like a volcano, that cannot rest; and insurrections broke out which were quenched with rivers of blood. So there was rocking to and fro; there was uneasiness; there was distress; there was poverty; there were grinding oppressions; there were exactions and extortions; there was everything that could make a proud people miserable.

It was in the midst of such a time as this that our Saviour came. No person looked at from the human side was more intensely in

sympathy with the Jewish history than our Master. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, taught in his youth in all the lore of the prophets and historians of Israel, and beloved of the people because he was so zealous a Jew. His heart bore witness to the suffering that was around about him. And wherever he went the roads were filled with people, because there was no contentment that kept them at home. As one in a fever turns from side to side, flushed with heat, and keeps turning, though a thousand turnings only teach him that there is no change of sensation that goes with change of place, so this fevered people, restless, unhappy, were at times sullen; and at other times they surged about our Master. We scarcely, reading the New Testament in our times, and under such circumstances of prosperity as we are accustomed to, can understand the condition of things which surrounded our Master when he was on earth.

Now, it was to such people as these that he said, "Come unto me, ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This declaration had an outward and an inward meaning. It had a literal meaning in respect to that unrest which came from the civic, social and ethical condition of the people; but it had a deeper meaning than that. It reached in to the source of all discontent. For, as by the power of an inward life and an inward faith, men can sustain poverty, and overthrow, and persecution, and grinding miseries, so by the same sustaining power men can deliver themselves from the domination, the exactions and the mischiefs, caused by their own fiery and insurrectionary passions. And while it had a historic application, it has also a spiritual application that runs through all time.

The utterance of Christ, "Take my yoke upon you," "my yoke is easy, and my burden is light," seems strange as contrasted with other of his teachings. It is language of encouragement, and would seem to imply that it is not difficult for one to be, and to rejoice in being, a Christian; and yet it is from the same lips that came the utterance, "Strive to enter," "for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Here seems to be a two-voiced and antagonizing utterance. Try, for it is *hard*: try, for it is *easy*. *Strive: Come*. The way is *narrow*: the way is *strait*. My *yoke* is *easy*; my *burden* is *light*. Is it true that a thing can be both hard and easy at the same time? What is the enigma? What is the mystery? Surely both things are true. Both things, too, are perfectly explainable—and that, not by any remote or metaphysical reasoning, but by the simplest and most straightforward statements.

Let us look at an inventory of what it means to be a Christian.

What are the qualities and states of mind with which one must be endowed in order to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ?

We have an inventory of the fruits which are wrought in us by the Spirit of God. Let us ask ourselves whether, if we were possessed and dominated by those fruits, it would really be a burden and a hardship? Suppose that each of the qualities which are mentioned as fruits of the Spirit were made into a yoke, and you were obliged to wear it? Or, if you think of the wain or the cart behind the oxen, and loaded, suppose these were the load which you were drawing as a burden, would that load be heavy? The fruits of the Spirit, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Not that these are all, but they are enough. When a man goes into a garden to make a bouquet, he cannot carry all the flowers that are there, nor flowers of all the kinds: he can carry only so many as he can handle. And when the fruits of the Spirit are enumerated, the sum total of human experience cannot be given: therefore the more salient points only are given.

Now, suppose a man had a yoke made and put upon him which he must needs wear, and suppose his spirit life were as perfectly under the dominion of love as a horse that is harnessed is under the dominion and restraint of the harness, or as a steer that is yoked is under the control of the yoke, would the yoke be a hard or an easy one? Not-loving is hard, and wrong-loving is hard; but is loving in its higher and truer and nobler sense a hard yoke? Is it hard for a mother to love? Is it hard for a father? Is it hard for a friend? Is that a hard life in which love is so supreme, so dictatorial, that it sways everything else to its will? "Take my yoke upon you." *Love* is one yoke which a man must take who is a Christian.

Another element that is mentioned is *joy*. The whole world is running after it. The mistake of men is, not that they want joy, but that they are unwise as to the kind of joy that they shall have. All men are seeking for joy, and if they would seek that joy which shall ally them to the spiritual, the eternal and the divine; if they would seek joy according to the will of God, as one of the fruits of the Spirit in the human soul; that is to say, if the Sun of righteousness shone on the hearts of men, and brought forth joy which hung in clusters as the fruit of divine inspiration, would that be a hard yoke to bear?

Many people think that to be a Christian means being a kind of half-way man. Many people think that to be a Christian means submission to restraints, wearing chains and shackles. Many people think that to be a Christian means being long-faced, having

a solemn countenance, just as a mask for caprices and fantasies. Many people think that to be a Christian means being squalid and lean—destitute of those richer qualities with which men are endowed. But the Spirit of God produces joy as well as love, and under its influence the soul sparkles. As the sea sparkles when on its ripples falls the sun, so that every single motion glances fire and light, so the soul, under the beneficent influence of the Divine Spirit, is radiant, or may be, with joy. If that be a yoke, who would ever object to wearing it? And yet it is a part of that to which we come if we adhere to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Next we have *peace*. Ah! there is something higher, more joyful than joy. It is peace. That is the equilibrium of the whole soul and nature under the excitement which is common to every heart. By it the whole soul is lifted out of the agitations and disturbances of the lower experience. There is a realm where men are filled with radiancy and sweetness and content, and that is the realm of peace. And is peace oppressive? Is that tranquil, luminous satisfaction in every part of one's nature, which makes him as sweetly content as a bed of flowers when the dew lies upon it in the morning, and the sun shines and strikes through every drop of the dew and causes it to reflect the thousand colors of the Orient—is that burdensome and oppressive? If peace be a yoke, how downy, how plushy, how soft to the shoulders must it be!

Then there is *long-suffering*. Oh, how naturally we cry out, as a chestnut stick that burns, and can never keep still, but expresses its discontent with perpetual snappings! How do men carry themselves in life fretted by annoyances and troubles! And yet, there is such a thing as carrying one's self so that there shall be hardly any troubles and annoyances. Men have, in life, ten thousand conflicts, and disappointments, and gashings; and, ordinarily, they receive these things in such a way, and have excited in them such impetuosity and irritation, that they throw sparks every whither; but one who has long-suffering, or the faculty of enduring a great while, is endowed with such a sense of patience and quiet and content, that his surroundings, his outward condition, his circumstances in life, do not vex and harass him. Men are ashamed to cry when they are hurt a little; but when the pain lasts, when annoyances continue, then men are apt to grow weary. It is no small thing to be possessed of the trait which enables one to bear without complaining, not momentary pains, but long irritations. It is a great thing to have a spirit of long-suffering which shall give one the power to suffer without losing joy, without losing peace, without losing love. It is a blessed state to which you have

arrived when you can subordinate all the things that beat upon you, so that you shall think no more about them than the old solid, stone-built castle thinks of the rattling hail in summer, or the driving snow in winter, that beats upon it. What the castle is, where there is light within, where there is fire on the hearth, where all is joy, while the winter scowls and beats and flails the outside, that may be said to be the soul of a man who is built so high and with such thick and secure walls that external things can afflict him but little. *Long-suffering*—what a glorious attribute it is to us! What an armor it is! Is a man in bondage who has learned that? Yet it is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and it is a part of being a Christian. Oh, that we might all of us have more of these yokes, more of these burdens; for they are yokes and burdens that give more strength than they take!

But this is not all. There is *gentleness*, also. Feebleness is usually gentle. Persons of a negative temperament, persons whose nature is rather torpid, persons who have no special force, are almost always gentle. They are soft. But softness is not the gentleness which the Spirit breeds: it is the weakness which the flesh breeds. The gentleness of the Divine Spirit working in men is such an influencing of vigor, of strength, of power, that they express themselves with sweetness. There is no gentleness in the world like that which is manifested by power. To see a strong, giant-built man meet in the way a little child, and raise it up, and say to it, "Bless you, my darling": to see his great, coarse hands, and his arms that are like bears' paws, go down, and, accompanying the act with some sweet words, lift the child to his bosom—that is a most beautiful sight. There never was a breastpin in a man's bosom to be compared with a sweet little child. To see a slender, pale-faced woman and mother take up a child is beautiful; we expect that; but to see a great, brawny man take up a child, with tenderness and gentleness, is beautiful indeed. Everybody marvels at that.

"A little child shall lead them."

Nothing is so sweet as the softness and gentleness of power. A man that has a gigantic intellect; a man that can control battalions and armies in the field; a man that has courage, and will, and determination; a man that has a lordly pride, and knows his strength, and moves among men with power—such a man, who is subdued by the influence of the dear Spirit of God, and who has such sweetness and gentleness that he treats all men with lenity, and kindness, and forbearance, and patience, has what is here meant by *gentleness*. And is that a bad thing to have? Is it a hard

yoke? Is it not an easy one? Is it a heavy burden? Was there ever a burden that was so light and joyous?

But that is not all. There is *goodness*. I was going to say, when I saw the first one, that the best thing in the world was love; but when I saw joy, I thought that was the best; and when I saw peace, I thought that was better than either of them; and when I saw long-suffering, I thought that, in many respects, was the best; and when I saw gentleness, that seemed the best; and now comes goodness, and that seems the best. They are all the best. The one that you look at last is the best. That fullness of soul, that kindness, that consideration which leads a man perpetually to rain satisfaction and happiness upon all around about him, not thinking of his own things, not studying his own welfare, forgetful of himself, and being a fountain out of which all the time flow streams of delight for others—that is goodness. There is a great difference between a man who is simply a right-minded, rigorously *just* man, and a thoroughly *good* man. There are a great many men in this world who are just, but who are raw-boned, who are very hard; and we hate to dash against them. There are a great many men who are cold and just. There are a great many men who are severe and just. There are a great many men who are selfish and just. We have a saying on this subject:

“Scarcely for a *righteous* [just] man will one die; yet peradventure for a *good* man some would even dare to die.”

There is now and then a man whose goodness is such that there is universal sympathy for him, and that others would stand up for him in times of danger, even though they should lose their lives in doing it; but men are not apt to be willing to lay down their lives for one who is merely just. Justice is very good, but that alone is like a heap of bones with nothing on them. Goodness is like the flesh by which bones are covered over. You want justice and integrity, but you want them clothed with goodness, with kindness, with gentleness.

But even that is not all. There is *faith*. Do you ever see men that are just moral, and only moral. They are thrifty; their barns overflow with abundance; their households are patterns of propriety; as citizens, they are law-abiding; they are public-spirited; they are kind; and they are very good in their way. But after all, their economy lies inside of the horizon of time; and when you talk to them of domestic affairs, and the public weal, and the interests of the commonwealth, and the events of history, they are interested, but their thoughts go no farther.

Oh, what would this world be if you were to strike a line

through the air as high as a man's head, and take off the top? There would be no atmosphere above; there would be no shining of the sun, moon, and stars; there would be no heavens. A man may be just and good and moral; but if he has no sense of the infinite, no sense of the reach of things beyond the sight, in the spirit realm, he lacks that which is more to be desired than any of these other things—namely, faith. By *faith* is meant, comprehensively, a recognition of those things which are above the senses—the great supersensuous realm which includes divine existence, the heavenly state, the sphere of angelic life, where dwell the spirits of just men made perfect.

Now is a man who has this condition of soul which I have described, a poor, burdened, over-harnessed creature? Take these qualities, and all the others (for I will not dilate any further on them); and I ask, would it be an oppression to be obliged to wear them? If you had them, they would not trouble you, would they? Would you not be glad if you had them? Ah! the very thing is the getting them. The danger comes in on the other side.

A boy says, "Oh, that I could only calculate an eclipse! Oh, that I knew as much as Professor Airy, of the Royal Observatory, and could see all that is going on in the heavens! Oh, that I could take a glass and penetrate the secrets which are concealed in the hiding places of the universe!" He can do these things; but not immediately, nor without work. He has not got to the rule of three yet. He must go through arithmetic, through algebra, through geometry, and into the higher mathematics, before he can do it; but he can work up to it.

Ah! what a magnificent range, what a liberty, a mathematician has who has possession of his science! and how hard it is for a man to be a thorough-paced mathematician! It is hard, and it is easy. It is easy when he has got to it, but it is hard while he is getting to it.

Says a man, starting in life, "Riches are a good thing. I should like to be rich." But do you like getting riches? Do you like getting up early, and going to bed late, and studying and working all the while between? There are hundreds of men in the community who would rejoice to be rich, but who will not pay the price for riches? The forethought, the diligence, the severe industry, the self-denial, the painstaking and the painbearing, necessary to the acquiring of riches, they are not willing to give. It may be a blessed thing for them to be rich, and yet it is not a blessed thing for them to get riches; and so they go without them. Or, if they get money, they do not keep it.

There are many more who believe it would be a noble thing to be universally respected and beloved; but the qualities which command universal respect and love are not easy to be had. They imply education—the broadest and most continuous education. If you teach a young man self-respect, and reverence, and methodical living, and self-restraint, and self-denial in its higher and broader sphere, the process seems hard by which you do it; and yet it is the discipline of such processes that brings men to their royal liberties. The way to these liberties seems to them cut in the rocks; and it is, so to speak.

Miners like gold when they have got it, but not while they are getting it. The digging and crushing the quartz for gold is hard work. The way to all things that are worth having in this world is up-hill. The road is strait and narrow to everything that lifts men above the animal. All things that are lofty and noble come by hard work—by that education which implies intense self-application and self-denial.

Look at it a little more closely. Consider the force of men's passions—their pride; their selfishness; their combativeness; their lower propensities generally. That part of human nature which dwells in selfishness, and spontaneously tends toward self-indulgence, is strong in mankind. It may be relatively weak in some, but in the mass of men it is strong. The bottom of the brain, as a rule, is far stronger and more fruitful in our race, than the top. That part of a man's economy which allies him to the flesh, and to matter, and to time, has ascendancy from the beginning of life; and he has to grow toward refinement and culture, as well as toward piety.

We are said to be *totally depraved*. I never use that phrase except to abuse it. It is a misleading phrase. But it is true that man is an animal when he is born. He is of the earth earthy. His first impulses, his instincts before his nature begins to develop, are those which connect him with this world, with things physical, and with the animal creation. Men are born low down, unspiritual. This great truth cannot be denied.

Gradually men escape from the dominion of their lower faculties; and if they submit themselves to the higher elements of human life, to the well regulated economy of society, and to the great material laws of creation, the effect is to inspire in them thrift, and refinement, and elevation, and finally virtue and true piety.

The structure of this life favors, in many respects, the development of the higher manhood; so that men run with the laws of

nature when they run toward virtue and toward God; but, after all, as the world is, as human society is, with its great biasing influences, when men throw themselves into the currents of human life, they tend to strengthen their animal nature. For the most part, human society represses the nobler qualities of men. If you look at the influences of society as they ordinarily act upon men's selfishness, upon their self-seeking, upon their self-indulgence, upon their overbearing spirit, upon their desire for that honor which comes from men rather than for that which comes from God, you will find that the effect is not to diminish, but to increase the power of these baser elements of their being. Not the best, but the worst parts of men are mainly brought into activity by their surroundings in this world. When, therefore, a man attempts to bring his higher nature into the ascendancy, he finds himself under the dominion of his lower nature, and it is hard for him to rise.

Now, if one is to come to the spirit of love, or joy, or peace, or long-suffering, or meekness, or gentleness, or goodness, or temperance, out of his natural state, in spite of the biasing influences and discouraging hindrances which surround him in society, as it is at present organized, of course his own will must be brought to bear; but not once in a thousand times have men wills which are competent to the task.

There is not a child, I suppose, that cannot educate himself, in the common acceptance of that term. Education is not a thing that a person pours into a boy. All that his teacher can do is to stir up what there is in him. If he has any education at all, he educates himself. Some people think that education is like medicine, which you can take according to this school or that school, from this doctor or that doctor; but if a man is cured, that which effects the cure is inside of himself. The doctor may persuade him to make efforts to get well; he may give him proper remedies which shall wake up the energies that are dormant in him, and which shall produce a condition by which the life-forces shall be set right, so that they can work; but no doctor goes and takes a man's disease in his hand, and walks off with it, and throws it away. If any man gets rid of morbid influences through the instrumentality of a doctor, it is because the doctor stirs him up to cast them out. If a man overcomes the diseased state of his system, it is because stimulants are brought to bear upon him, which wake up the lazy servants in his body, and say to them, "Clean out! Clean out! Clean out!"

And so it is in the great realm of moral reconstruction, moral education, moral development. Men themselves have to work.

But can they do it alone? Abstractly we may say that they can; but concretely, as a matter of fact, they cannot. They *will not*, that is—for that is usually the meaning of *cannot*. Men left to themselves never, by the power of their own reason, by their own moral forces, by their might in any form, undertake to develop their higher and nobler manhood.

Here is a man working on a farm. He is a good honest fellow. He is strongly built. But he is without much culture. He is destitute of aspiration. He indulges and rejoices in rude, coarse sports. But by-and-by he chances to be in a household where refinement dwells; and there his eye falls on one that to him seems angelic. Angels visit us all, first or last, for a little while, at least. Toward that one his affections begin to go out. And what a change comes over him! The vulgar oath which he used to fling about with so little thought he never utters now. Once he cared not how he looked; he thought that an honest man looked well enough in coarse clothes, and he was rather proud of them than otherwise; but a new life has been awakened in him, and he begins to be a little ashamed of his old clothes, and he wishes he had a good suit. Heretofore he has not cared for flowers, but he has learned that they mean something, and he begins to find beauty in them. Who ever thought of there being poetry in such an unhewn log as that? And yet, as sure as you live, he is sitting down and trying to write poetry! What is the matter? He is doing it of his own will. Moreover, he begins to take to music. He would give anything if he could sing. He is endeavoring to cultivate himself in various ways. Oh, that men could be kept courting all the days of their life! What a school the school of love is! How, when men feel the real divine fire, does it touch all that is noble, all that is fine, all that is aspiring, all that is graceful, and all that is beautiful in them! True love inspires the highest elements of the soul. Never was a man, unaided, competent to develop these things; but once let the light of love fall on his soul, and you will see how it will help him. Things that he derided, or cared nothing for, or regarded as of little or no consequence, he now looks upon as important, and worth striving for. He is conscious of his ignorance, and wants to learn. He knows what he lacks, and wants to supply it.

Now, let a man look upon the whole of life so, let him be brought to admire and long for all that grace and dignity and nobility and manhood which is possible to us, and which is enjoined upon us, and what a change will come over him! How, in our natural and lower state, do we disdain the higher manhood, and

pass it by, and count it as nothing compared with worldly thrift—but once let the thought of Christ fall upon us, as the chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely, and how in a moment does the divine love begin to stimulate everything that is wisest and purest and noblest and best in us! The rude man, inspired by this love, seeks by the power of his will and for the sake of Christ to polish, to refine, and to ennoble his nature. The lion-like rage in a man—how is it subdued by this yoke! The tough, enduring power, the sullen strength, which nothing else can overcome—how does it give way before this single element! How does one faculty after another come into subjection to it! How do the finer qualities begin to show themselves where it resides! How does the divine love bring out of the wintry heart as many things as the sun is bringing out of our long winter-locked earth!

“Come unto me,” says the voice of Christ. “And what will you give me?” “I will give you faith; I will inspire you with love; I will fill you with peace; I will cause you to overflow with joy; I will teach you temperance; I will instruct you in self-restraint; I will show you how to deny the ear, the eye, and the other senses; I will help you to live a noble life. Take my yoke upon you. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

My brethren, is not this so? Oh, if there was that enduring power of the Spirit resting upon you, lifting you up above the elements of the flesh, and above all the bondage of circumstances; if your life lay in the higher spheres; if you dwelt in the consciousness of the divine presence, of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the power of the Holy Ghost, do not you believe this would be an easier and better life?

And now, in respect to this, let me say that they who would begin a Christian life will find out, so far as externals are concerned, that it is easier to go for the whole than for any single part. When a man has been living in a wicked worldly way, indulging in unlawful pleasures, stained with vices here and there, he cannot break away from one of them and go on with the rest. Sometimes men propose to leave off a few of their indulgences. For instance, a man says, “I won’t swear any more;” or, “I won’t break Sunday any more;” or, “I won’t drink any more;” or, “I won’t go with bad company any more.” Let me tell you that men cannot leave off a few of their vices half so easily as they can leave off the whole of them. It is better for a man whose garments are defiled to take off the whole suit, and put on another, than to undertake to clean spot by spot with the garments on him. It is possible for a man to form a purpose so high as to make it easy for

him to reform completely ; but if he aims at only a partial reform, it will be hard for him, no matter what his purpose may be.

If a man is living as a thief and robber, a gambler—for a gambler is a thief and a robber; or if a man is living subject to habits of intoxication, it is better for him to cleanse himself, once and for all, by the consecration of his heart to God, than to undertake to cleanse himself piecemeal. The power of the Holy Ghost will set a man free from sins and tangling alliances sooner than he can set himself free from them by cutting off one after another. Some men think that if they come gradually out of sins they will be more likely to escape from those evils which come from sudden and radical changes. Yes, but if a man is in a house that is on fire, and is on the fifth story, and he refuses to be taken out suddenly because he wants to be cooled off gradually, by being taken from the room where he is to another that is not so hot, and to another that is still less hot, there will not be much left of him to bury when he gets out! It is not safe to take a man out gradually from the midst of a conflagration. It is better even to throw him out of a window, and let him take his chances of not being dashed to pieces. And if a man is addicted to vices in life, it is not necessary nor safe for him to go through a long course in getting rid of them.

Now, by the power of his will, helped by God to keep his purpose, a man can peremptorily, to-night, in this presence, come to this sacred resolution: "From this time forth I forswear all the evil that I am conscious of in my overt life; I bid farewell to it; I will steal no more; I will lie no more; I will swear no more; I will drink no more; I will give way to lust no more. By the grace of God I am bound for heaven." There is scarcely any more effort required to throw off the whole of a man's vices than to throw off any one of them. If a man is endued with the grace of the Spirit, it is as easy for him to aim at overcoming the whole of his sins, as to aim at the overcoming of one of them. He who has that faith which works by love is allied to the Lord Jesus Christ in such a way that he can undertake the fullest reformation with a strong prospect of success. All who have it are brooded under the same wing. To him who has it all other things shall be added.

For after all, the wisest step for men to take in respect to repentance of sin is to forsake all their transgressions, to aim at the highest morality, and not at anything short of it. If you cannot get anything else, take lower morality; but oh! you were born for something more than that. You were born for the sonship of God. You were born to bring forth all the fruits

of the Spirit. For you is the exaltation of joy. For you is the serenity of peace. For you is that love of God which passeth all understanding. For you is honor and glory and immortality. Aim at these things, and be content with nothing less than these things; for he that aims at that which is highest, includes all that is lowest, and all that is between them.

Are there any of you who have been thinking that before you died you would attempt to be religious? Do not think that religion is something that you can put on or off as a garment. Religion is a state of the soul. The kingdom of God is within you. Have you thought that sometime you would put it to proof? Why not do it now? Are you not old enough? Have you not sinned long enough? Have you not trodden under foot your own manhood long enough? Have you not lived with conscious imperfection long enough? Is not your conscience enough goaded and burdened by setting aside the commands of Him who loved you, and gave himself for you? Is there no power in the nobility of love and faith and hope? Will you not do the thing which you ought to do from the highest motives? Then do it, at least, from a sense of what is becoming. But is not pride in its higher forms strong in you? Then do it from the next lower motive—from self-interest; for “godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” Will you not do it from that motive? Then do it from fear; for the wrath of God is revealed against all that work iniquity. Though they may have temporary peace, they are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and the righteous retribution will at last overtake them. Do it from the lowest considerations, rather than from none; but I beseech of you, do it from the noblest considerations. I beseech of you by the love of God, I beseech of you by your sense of gratitude, I beseech of you by your aspiration or hope, turn from evil, and enter upon that faith wherein you will find that every burden of life is light, and that its every yoke is easy.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice that we may draw near to thee, though we cannot see thee with bodily sight. Thou great, invisible, but ever-present One, we rejoice that we may, by our souls, take hold upon thee. We rejoice that we may feel thy presence enlightening our understanding, and comforting our hearts. We rejoice that through faith thou art leading us away from self toward thee, and toward that higher life in which thou dost dwell. We rejoice that thou hast made it to be no more a matter of doubt whether thou hearest prayer. We have felt the sacred dew descending upon us. We have known where to carry our grief and our sorrow. We have felt the burden roll from our shoulders. Grace hath repaired the waste, when we were in despondency, and weakness, and want, so that we have renewed our strength as the eagles, and have been unwearied in all the way wherein we were called to walk. Thou, O God, by thine own life, dost give life to all things that are. Thou dost nourish all those to whom thou hast brought faith. Thou dost watch over the human family with a Father's eye. Thou hast looked upon us divinely, but with wisdom and mystery. We cannot understand the way of life; but we believe that eternal goodness presides over all things, and that justice and truth shall be apparent in thine administration; and that when we rise so as to understand, in thy presence, the new revelation of the way of God among men and upon earth, we shall join with those who claim that thou art worthy to be crowned, and to receive dominion, and honor, and glory, and power, forever and forever.

And now, we pray that we may hold fast to the blessedness of this faith. May we trust in thy invisible goodness, and love, and power, and wisdom, in the divine providence which overhangs all things, and pervades all things. And every day, in the midst of care, and fear, and sorrow, and trouble, and under burdens, bearing the cross, still may we find our strength in God. Yea, and in our own sweet delight may we rejoice in the Lord. May our strength, our wisdom, and all our goodness be of thine inspiration. And so may we be led in the way of this life that thou shalt see that we are preparing for that higher life which is beyond.

We commend to thee all those who are gathered into thy presence according to their necessity. Who shall read, who shall utter that which they suffer, and which they cannot frame into words, but thou? Thou dost behold as an open book the heart of every one. Thou knowest men's secret sorrows, their ailments; their troubles; their history. Things connected with their experience which they themselves do not know are open before thee.

Grant to every one, to-night, blessings, not according to his knowledge, nor according to the worthiness of his asking, but according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

We pray especially for all that may be under the cloud of bereavement; for all to whom the way of life may seem closed; for all across whose path lie obstacles which appear insurmountable. We pray for all those who are discouraged and disappointed. We pray for all those who walk heavily burdened. We pray for all those who are suffering in poverty, and know not which way to turn. We pray for all those who are suffering with infirmities and ailments which well-nigh take away the marrow of their life. We pray for all those who are waiting wearily for loved ones that are afar off and do not come, and whose hearts are sick from hope deferred. We pray for all those who, in their households and in their affairs, are bearing burdens which seem too heavy for them. We pray for all that suffer from the harassments and canker of care. We pray for all that are in any way heavily laden. May they hear thy voice calling to them, and saying, "Come

unto me;" and may they know the secret of access to Christ, and so of gaining peace and joyfulness even in sorrow. For thy servants of old learned how to bear all human trouble, and yet to rise above it, and to sing. Thou didst teach thine early disciples how to be as the offscouring of the earth, and yet to rejoice without cessation. Hast thou forgotten thy love? Art thou not still the God and Father of men? Art not thou a Saviour and present help in time of trouble? Wilt thou not draw near to all who are afflicted and oppressed, and succor them, that they may rejoice and put their trust in thee, and bear witness to others that it is not a vain thing to lean upon the Lord?

We pray for all those who are strong in the midst of prosperity, that they may not become self-indulgent; that they may not have overweening pride in their own strength, and skill, and knowledge. We pray for all those whom thou hast increased in worldly things. May they remember that they have received freely; and freely may they give. May they hold all the resources of power which have been committed to them in trust as stewards. We pray, not only that they may be strong for themselves, but that they may be strong for the world.

And we pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all that are standing upon the farther verge of life. May their last years not be dark, nor even in the twilight: may they, rather, glow as the hours of the setting sun with mellow light. And we pray that thou wilt prepare them for that rest which is just before them. So fill their hearts with the thought of God's guidance and grace that their testimony shall magnify, in the life of all that are around about them, the goodness and graciousness of their God.

We commend to thee all the little ones—the children—that are in this great congregation; and all the families to which they belong; and all the schools in which they are instructed. And we pray for all those who are teaching in our Bible-classes, and Sabbath-schools, and missions. May they be strengthened and inspired by thee. And may their work be poorly done, nor done in vain. Let them work on; and may they, O Lord, that that which they sow with painstaking, and it may be with tears, be bringing forth fruit; and soon may they come back with their bosom filled with sheaves.

We pray for all the churches of God, however they may differ from each other. Lord, fill them with thy Spirit; and if they may not unite in outward forms, may they be inwardly one in faith, and love, and devotion, and consecration to God. Oh! when shall the time come that that which is sacred shall be stronger upon the earth than that which is base? When shall kindness be more strengthened than selfishness? When shall men most easily unite in the bonds of love, as hitherto they have most easily united in the bonds of hatred? When shall it be in the power of true faith to bring nations together so that they shall hurt each other no more, and defile the earth with blood no longer? O Lord our God, thou hast promised this latter-day glory. We believe that thou wilt, in thine own time, bring it to pass. Oh! make haste, for the earth doth wait for thee, sighing, and groaning, and travailing in pain.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt everywhere overturn and overturn until He whose right it is shall come and reign.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray that thou wilt grant that the truth from out of thy Word may interpret itself to the consciousness of those who have heard it. We pray that thou wilt inspire in every one the desire for that manliness which is of God. May we never forget our birthright. We are the sons of God, fallen, as we seem to be, and are. Oh! arouse in every one of us, we beseech of thee, a sense of our necessity, of the deep sinfulness of life, and of our need of divine help. And while we are ourselves made willing in the day of thy power, and are workers together with God, be thou present, O Lord, to work in us to will and to do of thy good pleasure. We look to thee. Yea, why should we beseech thee, since thou art outshining or moving upon the hearts of men, persuading them? Grant that the persuasions of thy Spirit may not be unheeded. May one, and another, and another turn from evil to good, and from good to higher good. And may thy name be glorified, and may we, as thy children, be glorified with thee, in the advancement of thy cause and kingdom among men. We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

POSSIBILITIES OF THE FUTURE.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."—1 John iii. 2.

That would be a very poor heaven, and that would be a very ignoble existence, which could be fairly compassed by human thought. What kind of a commonwealth would that be which Abraham, in the early day that anteceded civil society, almost, could have understood? He was prepared to understand so little, that the sum of all that he could comprehend would have amounted to but a handful. What would that manhood be which a child could fully grasp and understand? How large would be a manhood which was no larger than a child's mind? A child can understand only according to the nature of its faculties. What would an art be that was no more than could be understood by a village paint-grinder? We see, all the while, even in our lower condition and limited development, how far things really transcend the capacity of one or another class to understand them.

And so, we are grateful when we find, in the Word of God, the recognition of the fact that that which is of the nature of perfection is quite incomprehensible to us; that we do not understand God himself; that we do not understand the heavenly state; that we do not understand what our own perfected natures ought to be, nor what they are who have risen and are among "the spirits of just men made perfect." The annunciation of our ignorance reassures and comforts us. For I should be sorry to have no grander God than that one which I can solve, and hold in my conception. I should be sorry to know that the future of the races of mankind would not be larger and nobler and better than anything that I can now take in by the utmost stretch of fancy or reason.

This is in clear and marked distinction from the spirit with

which many teach, in modern times, and from the spirit with which men have taught in all times, for that matter. The impertinence of dogmatic assurance is nowhere more rebuked than in the writings of the inspired teachers of the New Testament. "Our life," it is said, "is hid with Christ in God." When he shall appear, then we shall appear. We are under him that does exceeding abundantly more than we can ask or think. He is doing more than we can think, all the time. Paul declares that we see through a glass darkly, and know no more about the manhood of the life which is to come than a child knows about the manhood that now is; and that we cannot even tell what is the relative and what is the absolute in truth. Many things shall pass away. Some things are to abide. Some things are to remain as they are forever; as for instance hope and love.

"Why should not a disclosure which would be likely to be so influential as that of the absolute condition of the heavenly state have been made?" many will ask. How great a comfort it would be if the thousand questions which affection, and conscience, and hope, and sorrow throw into the heavenly land were solved! How effectual it would be for consolation and encouragement, and instruction, and strength in righteousness, if there might come forth an answer to these questions, so that we should know exactly where we stood and where we were to stand!

Now, all knowledge is measured by the attaining power of the human faculties. We do not know but there may be revelations coming to us all the time, which break on us as the waves break on unknown shores. One of the most startling things which Professor Tyndall told us, or revealed to us, in his lectures, was, that light, when analyzed by the spectrum, had beams in it which were black to our eye, but which were formerly unknown elements. They had been pouring down upon us and acting on us undiscovered, in spite of the research of philosophers, through ages; and it was only just lately that it was found out that they existed. How much of the universe is poured on us simply to find want of appreciation, and want of sensibility to apprehend that which is made known! The quality and the quantity of the understanding power in man determines how much can be revealed to him.

This is a fact which explains much of what men stumble over in regard to divine revelation; for it has been supposed that the revelation of God would be one that would take all the things of the spirit and shape them into crystalline accuracy, and put them beyond all cavil before men; whereas, it is a revelation which is relative to the unfolding process of human life and of nature. As the eye increases

in power, it is able to bear more and more light; and as the power of apprehension in men has increased they have been able to take in more and more truth. And the Word of God has been given to the world little by little. Small were the elements that were revealed at first. These elements have grown as men grew. And revelation has not preceded comprehension, but has rather followed it; because men cannot understand faster than they have the capacity to understand.

My dog, that waits for me, and throws himself into ecstatic postures when I come home—I know he loves me. He obeys me. He fears me. I long to help the poor creature. I long to break up that restraint in him which keeps him from rising into a higher knowledge of me. I am conscious that he leaves out the largest part of me, after all. When he comes and covers me with caresses, it is all very well, as far as it goes; it is the best that a dog can do; but I should be sorry if I thought we were not more than a dog could understand. That which he does understand, and which he loves and obeys, is that which is nearest in communion with him. It is the animal in me that he solves and comes into sympathy with.

I can understand how men, looking up, longing and yearning to know something of the other life, may be in as pitiable a plight, from being incapable, by the exercise of their inward nature, of taking hold of the subtler and higher forms of spiritual life, as an animal is in its longings and yearnings to understand human life, with which it is in sympathy, but which it cannot comprehend by reason of its limited capacities. There is not enough of man in the lower animals to enable them to understand man; and there is not enough of God in men to enable them to understand God.

The grand fact, then, on which all reasoning in respect to final states must proceed, is this: that man is not a creature complete and ended, but is a being who is in a state of change and progress, as is distinctly recognized in the Word of God; and that all teaching must conform to that universal and fundamental principle of evolution which is going on in the understanding and moral parts of human nature.

You cannot reveal faster than men are themselves developed. Throughout the Bible the kingdom of heaven is described as a grain of mustard-seed, beginning small, and growing larger and larger. The figure of the building, from which our verb *to edify* and the term *edification* substantially come, carries with it the same idea of beginning, and progress, and development, and final completion. All those words and figures, latent or apparent, in Scripture,

which imply the growth of man, are based upon the same facts. And childhood and manhood, when they are put in opposition to each other, convey the same idea which is contained in the great fundamental truth that men begin at the bottom, and gradually unfold, and grow more and more, and that they cannot understand a subsequent state by that which they have in a foregoing or previous one.

With such a basis, let us inquire into some of the particulars which show why "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." After the teaching of the sanctuary or the temple; after the teaching of the prophets and priests; after the teaching of the Saviour himself, of the apostles and of the holy men that have been subsequently moved by the Spirit, why is it that at last men cannot say "I know," in respect to their future state? Why is it yet true that "it doth not yet appear what we shall be" in the heavenly land? We know very little of ourselves here; and nothing is more unknown than man in his relations to time and to matter, and of the possibilities of man as a physical creature still less is known. The very knowing faculties are not themselves yet quite well studied. We hear that science is skeptical and doubting; and science does doubt many things; but there is nothing that science doubts so much as it does the senses. They are on probation all the time. In the laboratory, upon the anatomist's bench, in those places where instruments are employed for exploring the stellar universe, wherever scientific thought is at work, there the senses are doubted, and are forever being cross-questioned. So that men who know the most about the senses are the least likely to take their reports. We do not yet know how to use the eye, the ear, or the hand, so that they are infallible; or so that they even approximate infallibility. Before we accept their testimony we test them again, and again, and again; and watch the variations of their action, and exclude one after another of its results, till by repetition we come to something that we feel to be reliable.

Now, if we know so little of men in their higher state, how little can we know of them in their divine condition! How little can we know of what they might be brought to, or of what they might attain!

The relations of all the elements which center in man to make a perfect manhood in this world are very little understood. In the light of a thousand ages which concentrate upon to-day, how little can any physiologist reveal in respect to the irregularities that are taking place in the human system! How little can he know about them! Men who know the most, walk as it were, upon a path

scarcely wider than the edge of a knife-blade; and the least jar throws them from their equipoise of knowledge, and they find themselves on every side in ignorance.

How little can we control the conditions of life, for example! How little do we know what are the influences which are working upon this organization, that is subject to our inspection, our analysis, our dissection! How little can men know in respect to those things which relate to mankind here! How little can they know as to how far they may travel in one direction or another without violating the economies on which health and virtue stand! How little can they determine as to the best method of developing the race so as that they shall perpetually increase in those qualities which are good, and transmit them with some intelligence and some aim? We know that there is a law of transmission; we know that there is a right way and a wrong way in this regard; but how perfectly empirical is all science that undertakes to transmit to another generation a nobler race of men! For, much as education may do; vast as is the efficacy of culture upon men, there is something that is larger than that—namely, the original constitution—the beginning of the race.

A time must come, on the earth, when men shall begin and end a thousand degrees farther along than they do now; but as it is, how many men drag themselves through life with wounded faculties, and minds distorted and ill-balanced! How many men come into the world, as it were, on purpose to be shown off in the most fantastic guises! How little do men know of human nature, so as to secure, even in this life, a noble, manly, virtuous, Christian race of men! And is it probable, when we know so little of the most approachable characteristics of mankind in this world, that we shall be able to understand or foresee the higher estates in the world to come? How probable, nay, how certain the ignorance is! If we know so little of man when we study the elements which belong to his lower nature, how much less must we know of him when we study the elements which belong to his higher nature! If it is so difficult for us to understand him in his physical and more approachable nature, how much more difficult must it be for us, to have the slightest comprehension of his development in other climes, and in other conditions!

Take, for instance, the evolution of any of the faculties. How little does any man now understand of the possibilities of the intellectual development of great men. All men, we know, have intellects that can be played upon like thermometers, which receive heat or cold, and rise or fall, but which never make heat nor cold!

The mass of mankind have enough sensibility to receive ideas when they are put upon them by forces from without. But we know that here and there a man is found who *develops* a power in himself. He originates it there.

There is one step that we see in advance where the originating, developing power has a great purpose, and the man is called a *genius*. For instance, of him that can perceive, when it is shown that two and two make four, it is said, "He has some arithmetical intellect;" but how very soon does the common mind run out even in its power of receiving the truth of figures—the simplest and most common forms of truth! Now and then we find one who is quick in figures. Then we find one that is quicker. At length we come to men who originate in the direction of mathematics. By-and-by there rises up a single man who has power high above these, and so spires up into the heaven that he disappears among the clouds. All this goes to show what a range there is in the development of one part of the intellect.

Almost anybody can come home and describe a scene which he has witnessed in the street; as, for instance, the absurd posture of animals, where they scatter and run from each other. Every one, almost, can describe a dispute which he hears on some corner. All men are dramatists to a certain extent. Even the child is a dramatist; but he exhausts his capacity in a narrow measure. When, however, we come to dramatists professional, on such a scale as Shakespeare, to whom all mankind were as to us are the grass, the flowers and the trees, and who looked upon them, and painted what he saw; when we consider what a development of the intellect is possible in other directions, as illustrated by cases such as those of Newton among astronomers, and Bacon among philosophers, and Leibnitz, Descartes and Spinoza in their departments; and going further back, Aristotle and Plato—when we call up before us such notable natures as these, we have some conception of what is possible to the human understanding, though not one in a million or ten million has reached it. And suppose the fullest development had taken place throughout the race, suppose mankind were unfolded to the limit of the capacity indicated by the development of such men as these, how different would the world be from anything that we can now understand in man! We have only twilight intimations on this subject.

There were times when the great mass of mankind were so unintelligent that it was superlative folly for philosophers or wise men to say anything to them. They could not understand it. When we speak of common schools and common churches, for

greater education, we think we are speaking of things which shall develop what power there is in public intelligence and universal intellectual elevation and culture, which is changing the face of nations and of the world, and which by-and-by is to recreate the intellectual conditions of mankind; but how little do we yet know of these things! We only have hints thereof.

Consider how little we know of the moral faculties. We know a great deal of them unquestionably. We have come, through happy experience, to a knowledge of rightness, justice, conscience, truth, hope, faith, veneration. All these prime moral qualities we have a certain knowledge of, which we have gained in life. But who knows the limit to which they may be carried? Who knows what they may become in fineness and in quality by development? Who, for example, that has seen only the harsh and rugged edge of justice in this world, can state what justice will be when it is the supremest expression of kindness? It is not the expression of kindness now. Far more often it is vindictive. Not unfrequently it is hunger for blood. Justice, as it exists among men, indispensable as it is, is vastly crude and imperfect. How little have men ever run their thoughts along the line of the possibilities of justice till they perceived it in such a state that, while it led them to recognize the dignity and importance of rectitude, it yet nourished them in their imperfections, and carried them on and up?

Imagination we have seen developed so that it played around ordinary life with a thousand little fancies and graces in the household. We have seen the imagination carried up by the artist, by the musician, by the poet, by the orator. We have been helped in a variety of ways to form a conception of the range which the imagination may have through development.

How little, however, have we enlarged our conception of the moral sentiments, so as to know what they may be brought to by evolution!

How, then, shall we understand what we shall be hereafter? When the prime qualities of our existence are easily understood here, and when, under present conditions, they are so absolutely incapable of their full development, how are we to know what their probable growth is to be either in time or eternity? When you consider these inherent difficulties which lie in the way of human development, how much more impossible will it appear to be to conceive of what will be the result of the combination of all these noble faculties in men when they are developed and perfected!

There is hardly any child that cannot understand a whistle; but if you combine two or four instruments with a whistle, carry-

ing different parts which work towards an orchestra, how soon the child is lost! He may hear the body of sound, but he cannot analyze it. It leaves him behind. And the combinations into harmonies—can he understand them? He understands a ballad, and perhaps enjoys it; but when the piece is played in two parts, or in four parts, how few there are that can enter into the full conception of the combination of sounds, as they march in the majesty of the symphonies of Beethoven, where it seems almost as though the voices of creation had been brought into discipline, and were moved by his suggestion and his touch! We are lost the moment we begin to make complexity or combination. If we cannot understand intellectual elements nor moral elements in their single capacity, how much less can we understand them in their combination, when they are all perfected and brought into complete harmony with each other!

To this must be added what we shall be when the body is dropped. If there is anything that the Scripture teaches unequivocally, I think it is that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. They who think that the body will live must have a queer idea of bodies; for if there are to be bodies, they are to have neither flesh nor blood; and when you have taken away all flesh and blood, my idea of a body is gone. That which I understand the Scripture to teach unequivocally is, that that which is matter abides on this material globe, and that that which is spiritual and ineffable departs and abides in the other life. Who can tell or imagine what would be the effect of existing in a state in which there was no need of eating, no need of drinking, no need of watching; in which there was no weariness in labor; in which all necessity of supplying the appetite was gone?

When men speed across the sea, there is that vast enginery down in the hold of the vessel, which clamps night and day, and seems to be treading with giant footsteps, as it moves on its journey; but who can conceive of a voyage in which one is borne forward without an engine, without any jarring, moving softly through the ambient spaces of the air? And while man is living in this life subject to all its ailments and down-pullings and hindrances of every kind, who can conceive what he will be when his spirit wings its way upward, and leaves these encumbrances behind which have had so much to do with sinning in this life? The body, and all that belongs to it, will sleep in the grave, and the spirit will go forth in might and symmetry, and will indeed be a "new creature."

Consider one other thing—namely, the social element. Consider what a power there is in it of development. How much music

inspires music! How easy it is for the current to go where single drops could not move! Men tend, I think, in all great periods of development, to go forward by a certain enthusiastic movement of the whole.

Now, transfer that quality to spirits whose elementary faculties have been developed and perfected, who are cut loose from the hindrances of the body, and who are translated to another sphere where all of society is alike—where there is a common intelligence, a common moral sentiment, and a common national life; where there are none to molest or make afraid: where none sin and none attempt to sin; where the whole public sentiment in which the soul lives and moves is one of rectitude, and purity, and love, and aspiration, and glorifying worship.

Finally, and above all, consider how undeniable are those elements of truth which glint from out of the Apocalypse. Consider what that condition must be where God stands personal and disclosed in the midst of ransomed, elevated spirits, and pours the light of his presence upon souls that at last have been so developed that they can see him as he is, and are like him, and know as they are known.

In the early days of spring we plant seeds in the hot-house; we nourish them with artificial heat; we bring them forward so that after the spring is somewhat advanced, and the frosts have retired, and the ground has become warm, we can take them out, and put them in their true soil. So when we have been nourished for a season in this sphere, we are to be brought forward, by the goodness of God, to that sphere where the Sun of righteousness will shine upon us in full flame—not where we shall be surrounded by the undistinguishable and unknown and unknowable, but where we shall be to the Lord what children are to parents, or what friends are to friends. We shall see him face to face.

See how clear now, in the light of this thought, comes out the passage of our text,

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God.”

Blessings on the apostle for that one word! It carries with it a magisterial idea. Now that we are the sons of God, the higher things rule the lower; and higher than anything else—Paul being our witness—are faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love. The relation is to be that of sonship. We are to come, not into the relationship of magisterial power, nor of justice, nor of vengeance, but of love; and the center of the universe is love; and the farther we go toward that conceptual perfection, the nearer we shall be like God. We have the hint of love here, but we are to see its full disclosure in the world to come.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

We are on this side in the beginning of it; and when we reach the other side; when we have sloughed the chaff in which we grew; when we are wheat gathered into the eternal garner; when we are where all parts of our nature are effluent and effulgent; when we are in a society whose public sentiment nourishes and helps us; when we are in a sphere where God himself is personally present—though it doth not yet appear what we shall be then, it is because it is too high, too large, for any man to think of in this mortal state. "We know"—ah! what is it that we know, in this vast realm where we do not know? Well, "we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." How have we been seeing him, then, through all our lifetime? We have been seeing him under shapes, and figures, and parables. Sometimes he represents himself to us as a Lion, and sometimes as an Eagle. Sometimes his voice is the thunder, and sometimes his eye is the lightning. But that is not all. Sometimes he comes to us, and says, "I am a Road: walk on me." At other times he comes as the brown loaf, and says, "Eat me." At other times he trickles musically past us, and says, "I am the River of life: drink of me." Sometimes he says, "I am a Star." Sometimes he says, "I am a King crowned." Sometimes he says, "I am a Victor—a Captain." Sometimes he says that he is one thing, and sometimes another. Round and round the earth goes the spirit of instruction and inspiration, pouring out things which give to a man some hints (you cannot give him much more), some slight notion of the vastness of that God who fills all space, all time, all eternity. And so, when we think of him, sometimes we think of him as a Father; sometimes as a Brother; sometimes as a Comforter; sometimes as a Leader; sometimes as a Judge; sometimes as a King; sometimes as one thing and sometimes as another. These, however, are only images, symbols, giving us intimations of qualities; but by-and-by we shall see him as he is. The limitation of human faculty shall not prevent our knowing what God is. Now, we have no conception of his form or of his glory except from the most insignificant sources; but the time is coming when we shall go home as sons of God, and shall be changed, throwing off the raiment and chains of slaves—for we have been in bondage; the time is coming when we shall be emancipated, and shall stand in the presence of God; and then we shall no longer go by hints and notions. "We shall see him as he is."

To-day, if you would see the Acropolis, you must go and look at the masses of its ruins. You can see the crumbling walls; you

can see a few battered columns that sustained the portico ; you can see broken capitals that have been thrown down, one here and another there ; but you are left to restore by your imagination the structure as it must have looked when adorned with all the statues that Phidias carved. You have perhaps seen casts or originals of such as remain of these statues, but they are mere fragments of the magnificent whole ; and so you gather them together, and fashion in your mind some conception of that whole.

If sleeping, some night, the archæologist or photographer, who had been laboring among these gigantic ruins, and who had become deeply interested in his work, should see rising above him in the light of the moon the Parthenon, perfect, as it was in the palmy days of Athens, without a flaw, every line true, every part symmetrical, beautiful beyond description, that would be glorious in a small way ; but oh ! how poor a simile that is of the transformation which awaits our vision when we shall go hence ! Here we have been picking up fragmentary ideas of God, distorted, ill-mated, exaggerated in one way, and shrunk unduly in another ; and we have hardly been able to put them together, such is the low state of human society and human character in this world ; but what will our conception of him be when we shall stand and see him as he is ?

We must, then, in looking back upon this truth, distinguish between that ignorance which comes from excess of riches, and that ignorance which comes from excess of poverty. If the reason why we know so little of the other life was that there was little to be known, it would be discouraging ; but if the reason why "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," is that we are to be exalted to such rank, and dignity, and power, and bounty, and symmetry, and beauty, that it cannot enter into the conception of man in this lower and imperfect state, then ours is a poverty for which we are to thank God. That is to say, the ignorance which comes from such poverty is one which inspires us with hope and gladness as we look forward into the future.

If we could cull life ; if here the poets might be gathered, and there the true speakers, and there the noble-hearted philanthropists, and there the geniuses in execution ; if the men endowed with superior elements in the various walks of life could be brought into social relations on earth, we could imagine a circle well-nigh divine. And yet the imagination kindled by some such state of things would be twilight in comparison to that where everything is perfected, where everything is pure, where everything is enduring, where the air is balmy, and where the divine presence overshines the whole with beauty and ecstasy forever and forever. Heaven is

not a place where you shall stand like forty wax candles in two rows, or where your only occupation shall be that of going through mechanical genuflexions; but when all that is forceful in virtue, in thought, in moral sentiment, in genius, is expanded, amplified, and made glorious, then the heavens will be full of those who are moving every whither, endowed with life and power, and who are endlessly outpouring the grandest effects.

Although we do not know, yet that which glimmers tends to fill us with hope and with joy. It is not necessary that the sun should rise before the watcher is refreshed and comforted. Through the long night she has been watching; she is weary; she wonders when the day will dawn; and in some chance moment she looks forth through the door, and the whole east is changing from black to gray, and from gray to the pearly tint; and to her the night is past, to her the day has come, though it be an hour before the sun rises. And so it is not necessary that we should actually see these things; it is not necessary that we should know them very accurately. The knowledge that we are sons of God; the knowledge that we are called to glory; the knowledge that by-and-by we shall rise from the realm of the senses into the realm of the spirit—this is comforting. It is a source of joy and satisfaction to know that we are to let go all that which constitutes the external form, and to hold fast to that which constitutes the interior man.

If these things are so, what matters it how little we have in this life? If we are sure that the other life is life, and not a slumbering hole in the ground; if death is but the opening of the gate; if dying is translation; if passing from sentience here we reach a higher sentience there, one can almost bear anything in this life. "Christ, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame;" and the joy that is set before us, if fully revealed to us, would enable every man, methinks, to endure the cross and despise the shame. It is the unknown life to come, that cheers and blesses the known life that now is. For this is an orphaned life. Here we are helpless, or like stumbling children, with little strength and little experience; but we are living toward our manhood; and every year that we leave behind us is one station on the road over which we have passed; and every day the very dust that annoys us, and the very cinders that vex our summer eyes, are so many witnesses of the speed with which we are crossing that territory which separates between us and ours; between our seeming life and our real life: between the life that now is and the life that is to come.

Some light is thrown, by this exposition, on the question which

is so much asked and so little answered—a question that comes up from silent mothers' hearts all over the world, as white bubbles come up everywhere seeking the surface of the lake or of the sea—namely, “Shall I know my friends? Shall I know my children? Will my babes be my babes, and will my friends be my friends?” “It doth not yet appear what we shall be;” but I do not believe, for one, that God has thought it necessary to keep my babes babes till I come to heaven, for the sake of pleasing me. Babes that God takes are more than mighty princes on earth. They must grow. All that I ask is that they shall fill the same place in my heart when I get there that they did here; and that they will, I am sure, only in a greater measure.

Would you, then, for the sake of personal identity merely carry up the identity of the body? Is there not an identity of the soul? Is there not a personal identity of the nobler part?

As respects the knowledge of friendship, I believe that friendship is insoluble and indestructible. I believe, if it is true, and is kindled in the higher realm of the soul, that it is one of those things which cannot be rubbed out or effaced. It is written as if with the point of a diamond. The love that God makes to hover over the cradle, the love that God makes to abide in the companionship of life, so subtle and compact with various riches to which every day is contributing golden thoughts, and sweet affections, and noble fancies—that love is not going to be lost.

The body shall slumber here. What you are to be without a body, I cannot imagine; and what I am to be without a body, you cannot imagine; but of this I am sure, that in that land where I am to know as I am known, I shall know that there is nothing which I have lost that I shall not find with interest, and compound interest, in the other life. That life will be what you yearn for and pray for; and God will give it to you in such measure that you will say, “Thou art the God that does exceeding abundantly more than I asked or thought.” And she that goes weeping to the grave, to lay there her babe, and mourn through months and years, shall say, when God gives back that babe, “God, Father, is it all mine?” Yes, it will be all hers. When God is mine, and I am an heir with Christ, what is there that shall not be mine?

Every one of us will know each other in heaven. Every one of us will be nobler in heaven than we are here. The sensibilities of this poor, dim earth are no interpretation of the sensibilities of heaven. The great march of men through this life is scarcely a hint of the volume, the vastness, the magnitude, the grandeur, of that march, in procession, of soul with soul, through the eternal

ages. Whatever we do not know, one thing we do know, and that is, that we shall go to heaven, not to shrink with age, to find poverty, and to find distortion, but to find riches, and symmetry, and to develop into all the glory of everlasting youth. All that populates our fancy with ideal perfectness, and more, will be there. The noblest conception, the most rapt vision of the most ecstatic saint or seer, will be more than outdone. Heaven will be larger, heaven will be richer, heaven will be happier, and the glory of God will be more transcendent than it ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. Toward it we are being swept with an irresistible impulse. For I believe that, besides our own life, there is a great current of forces in which we are swinging upward and onward toward the invisible sphere. As the traveler on earth has a double journey; as in addition to the journey which he is himself making, he is swept along by the earth in its revolutions; so I believe that the human race is being swept in vast aerial circles toward better climes and nobler societies. Whatever may be done by tears, by sorrows, by temptations, by weariness, by study, by toil, there is something better than all that. The irresistible power of God is carrying the universe upward and onward to its final perfection and glorification.

Take courage, then. Look up. Listen. The voice of God calls to his suffering ones, and says, "Ye are my sons." Listen again. The Revelator says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

Our heavenly Father, we rejoice that so many hear thy voice, and are obedient to its call, and, though weak in themselves, are made stronger by thy Spirit, to begin and to continue the divine life, in the midst of all the environments and temptations of this mortal state. We commend to thy Fatherly care those who have been brought out of their darkness, who have, this day, in the midst of their brethren, made a profession of their faith in Christ Jesus, and who have entered into fellowship and covenant with this his people, and are to walk with them in the same faith, in the same hope, and in the same aspiration for eternal life. Will the Lord be gracious unto them severally? For thou knowest what is the battle that is appointed for each. Thou knowest what adversaries every one will have to contend with. All of them need the guidance, the strength, that is from on high—the divine Spirit. Grant that every one of them may have that light and that comfort which that Spirit gives. May they not be left to themselves in hours of weakness and in hours when they are tempted in over-measure. Let them not be suffered to despond nor to become discouraged. May they be steadfast in purpose. And may their hearts be renewed, and filled again and again with the divine Spirit. And so, through light and through darkness, through smooth ways and through rough ways, may they press forward, and prosper, unto the end of this mortal life. Comfort them in all their tribulations. More and more make them to understand how little this life is, and yet how much—how little in itself, and how much in that to which it ministers. May they use it as not abusing it—as the gift of God—as that which is bearing them onward and upward to a nobler life. May they rejoice in the will of God. May they be ready to accomplish whatever may be thy righteous purpose in them. May they abound in all gentleness, and goodness, and kindness. May they have the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, overcoming iniquity, and transgression and sin in those who are around about them.

May such as are parents know how to rear their households for God. May such as are yet young know how to grow up into a true spiritual manhood, rejoicing in the Lord, who is their Leader.

We pray that thou wilt grant that this solemn dedication which they have made of themselves may not be unmeaning. May it bring forth fruit. Even as the spring grows stronger and brighter, and waxes toward the summer, so may this day be but the beginning, the germinating hour of a life of blessedness to be developed in them. May they bring forth the pleasant fruits of righteousness; and may the heart of God rejoice over them and in them.

We pray that their life may be sustained, and that when they shall come to die, they may enter upon an experience of peace, and joy, and gladness, forever.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon all those who have witnessed this spectacle. May such as have faith in Jesus renew, to-day, their consecration, their hope, and their gladness in Him.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt cause thy blessing to rest upon all the families that are represented here. If there be any who are standing under clouds, with sickness and afflictions of various names, wasting their happiness, from day to day, we pray that the presence of the Comforter may be with them, and that they may be strengthened to carry their trouble and their burden till the Lord shall see fit to remove it. If there be those in thy presence who are conscious that the cares of life wear upon them, that the

* Immediately following the reception of members into the church.

yoke is not easy, and that the burden is not light, may they hear the and the promise of Him that calls them to his service; and may they find, at last, in Him, the realization of all his promises.

We pray for those who are standing in the midst of prosperity, that they may be delivered from pride, from selfishness, from self-indulgence, and from all the snares and dissipations which the heart practices upon men.

We pray that thou wilt grant that those in our midst who are laboring in word and doctrine, and are bearing out to the ignorant the tidings of salvation through Jesus Christ, may be abundantly blessed in their work. We thank thee that to-day we see the fruit of their fidelity, and the answer to their prayers; and we pray that still they may go on laboring, having their faith increased, inasmuch as the Word is not without power, and the promises of God are not void, but are Yea and Amen.

We pray that this church may be augmented, not only in numbers, but in the power of Christian grace. May all those who have named the name of Christ bear the likeness of Christ, and his temper and spirit, in themselves.

We pray for the outcast; for the vicious; for the criminal; for those that are sick; for those that are in prison; for those that are far from home; for those that are strangers among strangers. Will the Lord bless them all to-day.

And bless, we beseech of thee, the whole Israel of God. Remember thy churches of every name, wherever they may be. Purge them from error. Imbue them more plentifully from on high with the spirit of the Master. We beseech of thee that the cause of God may be advanced in all the earth; that ignorance may flee from intelligence as the night from the morning; and that knowledge may bring in virtue; and that virtue may bring in true piety; and that all the earth may see thy salvation.

We ask it in the name of the Beloved, to whom, with the Father and the Spirit, shall be praises, evermore. *Amen.*

CHILDREN.

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 10.

The spring has come—the time in which, throughout all the temperate zones, the young are beginning to come forth. The yard, the field, and the edges of the forest hear the bleat of the lamb and the calf. The animals are rejoicing in their own rude way, and filling the scene with content and delight. There is universal beauty in the young, outside of the limits of the human family—the young that have begun to develop their powers. The offspring of animals are extremely graceful and extremely beautiful; and many of those animals which are in their full-grown estate repulsive are in their early estate very attractive. Lambs; calves; colts; pigs, eminently; young dogs; kittens; wild whelps, whether of the fox, the wolf or the lion—no man can see these, when they do not know that any one is looking at them, indulging in their frolics, and not admire their grace, and in many respects their eminent beauty. And if one sit by and see the maternal love which is manifested—its fondness, its patience, its wiles, its caresses—one cannot but have sympathy, and feel that there is a strain of experience which runs through beasts and men.

To the animal kingdom, we apply no moral measurements. The life of an animal, whatever it may be in fact, is universally assumed to be secular. Animals grow up, without school or care, to all that they have in them. The lion's whelp needs no master to teach it how to be a lion in every particular. The tiger and the panther never fail to have their offspring well brought up. Every bird, without a singing-master, learns his song. Every animal, without being put to an apprenticeship, has an instinct by which he learns the limited art which belongs to his life. A beaver is a builder from the beginning, and requires no outward help.

The idea of good and bad is never attached to animals that have

in them very little choice between right and wrong, but are impelled by a creative necessity. There can be no such thing as right and wrong unless there is a moral endowment; for wrong is a variation from given rules; and where there is no perception of rules, or where rules do not exist, there cannot be any such quality as wrong.

It is only when we rise through all the correlative and inferior creations to the level of our own selves that we begin to look upon the little ones with a different measure, and with a consciously different experience. In the human family, when children are looked at in the light of moral government; when they are regarded as accountable and responsible beings; when they are to live under multiplex laws; when they are to have their character determined by their knowledge of these laws, and their relative obedience to them; when their condition, here and hereafter, is believed to turn on this character; when their very immortality is colored by that which they are, and by that which they do or avoid, in this life—then there arises to our thought something more than their grace and their sweetness and their beauty. It is not enough that we rejoice in seeing their gambols, as we do the frolics of little animals. There hovers over children a thought so vast, so deep, so far-reaching, that were it not for faith and hope, it seems to me no man could look upon children but with sadness. The questions which brood over them are tremendous.

It is not to promote discontent, it is not to excite thoughts of gloom, that I shall look, first, upon the dark side of this subject: it is because I know that such considerations as I shall suggest exist in the hearts of multitudes of people. It is because many people feel guilty in having such thoughts, and do not know what to do with them. It is because a great many, having them, turn away from, lift themselves above, and set themselves against what seems to me to be the only remedy which there is for their trouble on this point. I desire to show them, as far as I can, that the apprehensions which afflict them are entertained by others—by all who have hope in God, and believe in immortality; and that there is, though we may not be able to show it, a way out of the darkness, and into the light.

Consider, first, the fact that children depend very largely for their chances in this world upon their organization both physical and mental. They are brought into life without their own knowledge, and without their own consent. They are not always brought into life under circumstances which are best for them, so far as we can judge.

For example, it would seem as though leprous persons should never give birth to children ; but they do. It would seem as though persons who are so far gone in scrofulous complaints as to be sure to entail on their posterity a fragile constitution, a constitution so devoid of stamina that it will break down in the midst of its duty, should never be permitted to have offspring ; but they are permitted. They come together in the married state, and are certain to transmit to their children, not simply disease, but ill-assorted faculties and temperaments which will work against them all their lives long. They come together to endow their children with inevitable misery. And there is no angel that stands to warn them. There is no knowledge prepared for men and women even yet. After so many years, and after science has gone so far as it has, there is but the most obscure instruction that can be given in this direction, so little even now is known, or has been known in days gone by. And if we are to believe, as has been believed by good men in all ages, that the condition of human beings in the life to come depends upon their attainments and their state in this life, and that their state in this life is put almost beyond their control by the unwisdom or the mistakes of parents who have thrown them into life badly organized, then how strange is the mystery ! Are children so dear to God ? Are they so dear to Christ ? Are they under the convoy of angels ? If so, how is it that they should be permitted to come into this life in so strange a way ; that there should be no provision whatever by which those who enter into parentage should be endowed with knowledge ? They are themselves but twenty years of age. What do they know for themselves ? And how much less are they prepared, as parents, to do anything for those little children on the doing of which, we are taught, depends their immortality ?

I confess to great trouble on these subjects. I never brood upon them in my own thought without surprise. If I were to take a child of mine, five years old, and put him into a steamer, with a ponderous engine, and all the appliances for making a voyage, and shove him out without captain, without pilot, without any helper, and tell him to cross the sea, or be irretrievably lost, I could never forgive myself. It would be cruel thus to launch a child on the sea that did not know anything about the hull, nor that which propels it, nor the currents, nor the winds, nor the waves—that did not know anything about navigation ; but how are children launched into this world, coming, through a portal of ignorance to a life in which they are ignorant ! And yet we are taught that their safety depends on things

which are not made known to them; on things, for instance, in respect to their bodies, of which they understand nothing, or about which their understanding is perverted. And they make this perilous voyage of life without a knowledge of its laws; without a knowledge of their physical structure; without a knowledge of the mind which they carry; without a knowledge of those laws which govern the conscience; without a knowledge of society. They are all of them scholars from the very first, with poor instructors. And parents, oftentimes, are conscious of their profound ignorance about their children. They bring them up by routine or empiricism. And when you come to think of the child's destiny; when you come to think of his life beyond the grave; when you come to think of the teachings of Scripture in regard to the eternal world and the judgment-day; and then, when you come to look at the way in which children are brought into life, oftentimes by vicious parents, and oftentimes under circumstances in which they are sedulously taught in evil, and sent adrift with apparently so little divine help and succor, it is enough to make a man shiver to his very soul with doubt and fear, and sometimes with anguish.

Consider, too, how little the best are likely to know under the conditions in which they are made teachers of their little ones. I have spoken of those who transmit to their children very imperfect physical health and very imperfect mental constitutions, and who are quite as likely to pervert them as to build them up in right things; but consider how it is in regard to those who stand far higher in the scale than these. The majority who are set to train children influence them against their moral benefit, training them for physical and for secular things; training them for self; training them in pride, and in vanity; but consider how, even under civilized conditions, and under Christian institutions, parents come together to rear children on whose destiny the most tremendous issues depend. And consider how utterly unknowing they are, being hardly more than children themselves. If the bringing of children into life had been given only to those who had grown wise, and had studied so as to be prepared to take care of children, it would not, perhaps, have surprised us; but it is not so. Even to those who are the best endowed in their spiritual nature, who have had the advantage of the best methods of education, and who have had the best opportunities to learn what drill a child stands in need of—even to them their children are a bundle of mysteries; and all that they try to do, or can do, for the most part, in the early days of their children's lives, is to rear them as little animals, and then

little by little instruct them in conventional morals, and then in the higher forms of morality.

Now, if to steer exactly right across this world were heaven, and anything less than that were eternal destruction, what hope would there be there for any child? For one, I cannot see how any parent can look upon his child in any way except with skepticism as towards the current theology, or else in a spirit of despair. When I look out upon the globe, and see how the population is thrown upon it; when I see children coming down, sent, as it were, almost as carelessly as flakes of snow fall in winter, or as drops of rain fall in summer, some hitting on rocks, some on the water, some in the fields, and some in the wilderness; when I see how little has been known in regard to the development of children in the past, and how little is known on that subject even now, I confess to the profoundest surprise. If you consider this matter from the standpoint of Calvinism, and if you have courage to follow out the inevitable logic of that system as it is related, not only to the present, but to the whole future, I do not see how any man can dare to enter into the family state. If I were a Calvinist in the old accepted sense of that term, and believed in the character of God which is presented by that system, and in the theory of moral government which that system inculcates, I would not, so long as I had life and reason, bring into this world a creature the chances against whose salvation seemed to me a hundred to one.

I cannot express this feeling as well as one has expressed it who has written to me out of the depths of a deep nature. It is a woman's writing:

"How can Christians, who have shared in the inevitable pain, and observed some of the awful possibilities of the life that now is; who believe that the soul is immortal, and the wages of sin is death, *dare to marry?* dare to introduce into existence other immortals to swell the ranks of suffering humanity, when among their generations there must almost certainly be some whose souls are lost forever?

"Oh, I beg you will not put me off with the answer that such a question could only arise from a morbid state of mind, nor the plea that the world must needs be kept populated, and that the homes and children of Christian parents are the great reliance in Christianizing that population. I know that I can, and I hope am doing as much for the Saviour's little ones who have no parents, or worse than none, as I would do for my own; and though when alone, and faint and weary, the unutterable sweetness of human love appeals to me—when my womanhood cries for its completion and crown in wifehood and motherhood—I have kept sternly on my way, resolved that no child, or child's child, should ever cry from hell to me remorseful in heaven. *'Why did you give me life?'*

"May God in his wisdom and tenderness teach you the word to say to me.

"In all humility, and desiring only to know my Lord's will, and to do it,

and praying for his blessing on you and yours, privately and in public I am——”

And so on, signing her name.

What have you to answer to such an appeal, or cry, rather, of a human heart, as that? If the chances were nine in favor, and one against your child's salvation, would you dare to take that one chance in ten?

Brethren, these are questions which are asked in a thousand hearts, and in a thousand families. They are questions which the theological systems must answer, or acknowledge that they cannot meet the whole case, and that they have failed to make a proper statement of the facts connected with the moral government of God in this world.

When we look at these facts we need to have a brighter side presented. We need some solace. We need some explanation, if it may be had. At any rate, we need hope. We need to believe that a malign Deity does not reign. We need to believe that the average of human life and society is not so bad in its results as we have been taught to suppose. We need a faith that there is, ultimately, in the divine love, and in the divine resources throughout the universe, a recuperative energy far greater than we have been accustomed to attribute to them. I need it to keep up my hope.

Consider, then, the other side a little. Look at the conduct and teaching of the Lord respecting children. When he was teaching the multitude, parents who had their children with them desired to bring them to him, that he might bless them. The disciples had a full share of that egotism which belongs to adult life. They were men of function and station; and feeling their importance, they brushed away the nurses and parents, and said, “Do not trouble the Master.” It is said that Christ was exceedingly grieved. The language is very strong in regard to the outburst of resentful feeling in the Master. He was angry, and he rebuked the disciples before the multitude, saying:

“Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

Elsewhere he says:

“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

People sometimes ask me, “Do you suppose that children of parents who are not Christians, children that have not been baptized, children that have not been entered into the covenant of God with little children, are saved, or are safe when they die?” I say to them, “The Master taught that the grown-up man could

not be saved unless he went back and got into the condition which little children are in." Is that a risky, perilous condition, to which we must ourselves be transmuted by divine power, going back on our adult experience, to reach that which they have in the very beginning?

But in the text we have a still more striking declaration of the Master:

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

There has been a world of discussion as to what that means particularly. I do not know what it means *particularly*, but I know what it means *generally*. I know this: that whatever may be the special theory of angelic ministration, Jesus taught, and was understood to teach, that there was a care, in the presence of God, over children, which made them hopeful, safe. And as Christ was God manifested in the flesh, and came to make known to men, by visible, understandable teachings, what were the feelings of God, he taught us what was the divine feeling respecting children. He did not say, "Let elect children come to me, and let me put my hands on them, and bless them." He did not say, "Let the children of the favored nation come to me." He said, substantially, "Let children at large come." Is it claimed that they were probably Jewish children? There was in Galilee as large a population of Gentiles as of Jews. All nations were represented in this crowd. Foreigners came to him for help in sickness as much as the native population; and it is assumption to say that these children were not gathered from every people.

Christ, looking upon them, said:

"Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

The ministering angel of children is the favorite in heaven, and stands in the presence of his Sovereign, and is in power. It was the teaching of the Lord in respect to little children, that in the great scheme of the universe God is on their side. And if, when children are brought into the world, you look at them in the light of natural causes; if you look at them not merely along the line of civil and political influences, but also along the line of the teaching of Christ, and see that both realms are luminous with instrumentalities; if you believe there is a current, besides the earth-current, which carries on a work that our eyes cannot see, in accordance with the declaration *that the kingdom of God does not come with observation*; if you believe that the mind and will of God is characterized by a love which is greater than anything that earthly father

or mother knows; if you believe that God broods over the infant population of the globe, and that, though they have no pilot nor teacher here, He is both Pilot and Teacher to them; if you believe in such a divine providence special to children, adapted to their want and life, and applicatory to them in the ratio of their weakness and their need—then the cloud is gone, and it is noonday. For though I do not know how it is that children shall be guided from childhood to manhood; and though I cannot understand the whole interplay of the scheme of God's interference in behalf of children; yet tell me that there is such a scheme and such an interference, and I am content to believe it without knowing how it is true. The thought that God loves children; that he broods over them with parental care; that he watches them through their inexperience and ignorance and unfavorable biasing; that he is busy bringing them up to a position where they are masters of themselves; and that then their responsibility does not come to them according to human law, but is measured by God, the infinite Lover, according to what they have had given them, and what they are, and what they can do—this thought, if it does not wholly take away the distress of former painful considerations, alleviates them greatly in my mind.

Leaving out, now, these questions of the safety of children, and leaving out our wonder at the way in which children are brought into life, let us look somewhat at the economy which comes with this help, and at the uses which there are, in many respects, in the condition in which children come into life.

It is probable that every one of the traits of higher manhood in adults springs from the drill and the training which little children require and inspire. I doubt whether preceptual teaching could ever have brought into this world any considerable degree of disinterested affection. I doubt if self-denial, and heroism in that direction, could ever have been propagated in this world as a matter of duty. Conscience never brings forth love. Intellectual reasoning never produces rich and warm caresses. It is the economy of God's providence to set men and women together in the household and give them little children, and draw them toward these little children by the instinct of love (instinct in the early day, and companionable love in a later day), and out of this love to develop all the character, forethought and industry which are necessary for the good of these children. There are men who are very selfish toward their neighbors, very selfish in their business, very selfish in their pleasures; there are men who, as citizens, are not true to the laws under which they

live, nor true to the commonwealth, but who, if you go into their households, and see how they deal with their children, seem to have an entirely different nature. They lay aside the selfishness. The pride and greediness which characterize them out-of-doors are gone when they are in-doors. Indeed, the faults which they exhibit outside are often faults which they take on for the sake of being able to take care of the little children that are inside.

It is no small thing to bring up a child. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is very easy to say; but to "train up a child in the way he should go" is not so easy to do. The task is hard, though the text is short. And no man can recount the history of it. I think that the most wonderful book that could be written would be a book in which an angel should write all the thoughts that pass through a faithful mother's mind from the time that she first hears the cry of her child, and knows that it is born into the world, and rejoices in the midst of her griefs; from the moment of her absorption, or annihilation, pouring herself into the child. Her wonderful gladness of fatigue; her unwillingness to divide her care with any; her heroic sacrifice of all that is brightest and best in life, with no prospect of remuneration except the satisfaction which she feels in serving that little mute and helpless child—these are past description. Let the party drive, and the giddy dance whirl round, and the lights glisten: she that last year was a *belle*, courted on every side, and found her highest joy in the praises of multitudes of admiring suitors; she, the very height of whose joy, a few months ago, lay outside of herself in admiration, is now a mother. Behold her, in a little cottage, with no great wealth; with, it may be, only a moderate competence; with no witness; with none to praise, and, for the most of the hours of the day, with no companionship but a little babe, and a babe that cannot sing to her, but can only cry to worry her—that cannot even look at her and know her. No sound of music greets her ear. There is nothing to relieve the tedium of her life except this little one. It is her joy to take her babe, sick or well, night and day, and bear it in motherly arms. Whence this sudden transformation in which her pride has gone out, and selfishness in her is dead, and her life is transmuted into a providence?

Men who in all other things are living as other men do, selfish and proud, in the household are angelic—for here the father falls into the same partnership. Directly or indirectly he is made to participate in this bounty and culture of love.

When one of the little army of the family brings out its banner

and calls for one volunteer, and another, and another, till the household has its regiment band, see how many there are that respond to the call. Look at those families where there are five, six, seven, eight, and, blessed be God, eleven, as there were in my father's household, where the center was—what? The eldest born, that now had grown large and strong, and that was subtle, and ingenious, and fertile in all expedient? Was it those whose faces were full of signs of prematurely developed knowledge? Was it those who had function and powers in life? Was it the grown-up boys and girls? No. Still the altar was the cradle, and the greater served the less. Was the babe sick? There was not a door in the house that dared to creak. The very foot of the hired servant in the kitchen was softened. All sights and all sounds were taken out of the way. The whole commonwealth of the household bowed down to weakness and to want. Was there ever such an emptying of self? Was there ever such a serving in the spirit of disinterested love? •

Look at churches. See what a coarse way we have of making men good in churches. There can be instruction imparted in churches, but you can never get much disinterested kindness out of a church. In the household, however, manifestations of such kindness are seen continually. Every family goes through drill, and does not know what God is doing with it. In the family all the children serve the father and mother; serve them in love; serve them not in such a way as to abolish anything that is in them, but in such a way as to enable them to turn all their forceful faculties into the current of a purified and noble affection. They grow up in affiliations, giving and taking, and doing these things along the line of disinterested affection, and being taught to do them so. What an education this is!

Has it seemed strange to you that men destined to eternity should be brought into life through such a dark portal, and that they should have parents and teachers who know so little? Well, however these things may be to the spirit which prevails in the great currents of life, when the child comes into the sphere of the household he is surrounded by genial influences. It has become proverbial; it is the universal feeling; it is understood even among barbarous and savage nations, to a certain degree, and more and more as you go toward Christianity, that the household is God's temple of love. Every child joins the church of love, and is brought up under the influence of love. How wonderful is that economy!

Parents, as I said, do not know how to bring up their children.

They do not know, many of them, where the liver or the heart is. They do not know what a nerve is. They do not know anything about the functions of these organs. But they know how to love; and love is encyclopædiac. Everybody who knows how to love will find out through love everything else. Considering how ignorant parents are, children are wonderfully brought up. When I see what children go through, I think they are the toughest atoms in creation.

Consider that probably the distinctive ideas of the divine government are better to be derived from the relation of parent and child than from any other source whatsoever. I do not mean that all conception of God's government and governing are exhausted in the round of the household; for I perceive that there are elements of divine government which have their exposition in the physical globe, and that any complete rendering of the divine government must take account of physical laws, and the absoluteness that is in them. I perceive, also, that there are in physical, social, political and moral economies, ideas of moral government which must be taken account of in framing a perfect theory of divine government. But I perceive that that which is distinctive and powerful in Christianity, or in the divine moral government, is found in the realm of the household. And I think it may be said that God's moral government, looked at as a whole, must include that which we see in the family, and that we see its peculiar nature in the developments and disclosures which are taught in the experience of life between parents and children as we see it nowhere else. God does not govern men as he does rocks and inanimate matter; nor does he govern them as states and nations are governed: he governs them individually according to those principles which are evolved in our own economy and experience in the family. He is a Father. He was represented as the God of nature who thundered and lightened, in the early day; but as men came to understand it, he was developed more to them as a magisterial God, a King, a Ruler; and when Christ came he taught men one universal prayer to be repeated till the world shall swing its pendulum for the last time; and that prayer for all men begins by saying, "Our Father." I stand by that prayer. I stand by all the teaching in analogy with it in the New Testament. And I say that the more we come to comprehend the nature of God and his government and administration, the more we shall see that the relation of a Father, the dynamic influence of love, is to be taken into account, and that everything that shall traverse or set aside the great principle of divine love in the moral government of

God is treason against the true representations of God in Christ Jesus.

We have not freed this subject from all its difficulties; we cannot do this until we know all things; and we shall not know all things until we leave the body, and rise to the heavenly land. We now see through a glass darkly; but I think that over against the dark side, over against doubting and questioning unbeliefs which frequently creep into the minds of those who muse and meditate, I have set some considerations which throw light upon our path.

I remark, then, first, in making a few points of application to this illustration, that it ought not to be a matter of incaution, or indifference, or accident, how persons come together in the household estate. Knowledge should precede marriage; and a child that has wise parents should take heed to the counsels which, from their own experience, they can give; and more and more selection should be made, not by chance affection, but according to those great laws which are being laid open and made known to men by the researches of the wise. To rush heedlessly into marriage; to take upon one's self all the obligations implied in it, in a light-hearted spirit, without deep thought, is sacrilege. Nor ought we to permit ourselves to suppose that all love that leads to marriage should of necessity be merely a sentiment. Because calculated marriages, because parentally-arranged marriages, are so apt to be in the interest of selfishness; and because there is so much beauty in the enthusiasm of an involuntary love, some have come to believe that it is not right in any way whatever to interfere with accidental choices between heart and heart; but the pitiful experience which has often followed such choices ought to teach us more wisdom. Certainly it ought to teach us more caution. They who are laying the foundations of households on which their weal or woe is to depend, and who are to bring into life children whose immortality will be largely dependent on their care, ought not to rush into the family relation without thought, or the light of experience.

I, too, believe in romance. I believe in love at first sight—provided it is a love that will stand second sight. I believe in disinterested affection. Nor would I counsel my children to marry for money, or for distinction, or for position. I should rather say to them, "In regard to money, *make* what you are to spend; and as to position, *earn* it. Do not *steal* it through somebody's daughter!" Manhood; an honorable self-reliance; a pride that does not mean self-liking, but that means elevation above all low and vulgar considerations and motives—this should give one a competence, and should lift him into a high position. But it is not necessary that

we should be blind as a bat in order to be disinterested. Having eyes, look; having ears, listen; and having an understanding heart, learn. The experience of ordinary life shows that there are ways which seem right to a man whose ends are death—nay, worse than that, a whole generation of family discords; and that there are ways which seem hard to a man, whose ends are blissful, so as almost to equal our conceptions of heaven.

There is no nobler state than that of marriage. When men have entered into that state they stand nearest to God. Yea, they stand where the very law and love of God will be translated into human experience. Into this high estate men should enter religiously, seriously, and with instruction.

I remark, secondly, that I would not quench one single ray of the joy and cheerful hope that is felt when children are born into the household. God sends them; they are his; and although it seems, on the earth-side, often, as though he had sent them by a strange door, and left them almost like foundlings in your hands; on the other side, where we cannot see, and faith only can interpret, no child is born into our hands here that it is not taken out of his hand there. I believe that God sends children into life, and never forgets them. Strange as the companionship may be—so strange that we cannot clear the mystery; yet to me ten thousand questions are solved by the declaration, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” I believe that our children come out of the bosom of God’s love, that they are born in hope, and that they are to be brooded over by the divine providence. This is an unspeakable comfort. When growing up, as long as they are yet children, they grow up within the bounds and covenants of the divine love; and when they come to man’s estate, their responsibility is graded by God: not by the human mind, but by Him who knows all things; so that no man will feel one single particle more penalty than he deserves. Such is the justice of universal love that no man will suffer so much as by a single hair of his head more than that which is amply and abundantly his desert. Men’s mistakes; their infirmities; their ten thousand biases and blunders and stumblings; all that which does not go to constitute deliberate and voluntary transgression will not be counted against them in the way of penal settlement.

It is in this light, too, that I find great comfort in the departure of my children from me. No person is fully united to another by love, nor by hope, nor by co-operative work in this world. Our friendships are never completed till we are bound to each other by the common experiences of sorrow; and I am united to you by

those experiences. I have often been called to comfort you, in the providence of God, when your little children were gone; and God has made me an able minister of consolation under such circumstances. He has taken my children from me; and whatever you know, I know. I have shed tears in the day and in the night; and have gone for years so that I could not hear the name of my children and keep my voice. I know what longing is. I know what loneliness is. I know what that unspoken, unutterable, and unsolvable ache of the heart is which is known of God, but which no philosophy can compass or define. And I know another thing—that all our children that have gone from us, are unspeakably better off than when they were with us. They have gone whence they came. They have gone back to eternal life. They have gone under the convoy of angels. If while they are in our care God's angels minister to them and watch over them, how much more will be ministered to them when they shall have lost what little we can do for them! If they are convoyed by angels here, how much more will they be convoyed by angels in the other life! Our infant children are safe.

Shall we know them again? Will they be children when we meet them? Will they be ours? or will they be like drops which fall into the sea, and are a part of it? Who can tell me? Let him speak. I cannot tell. But one thing I know—that when we are in the other life we shall be more than satisfied; and that is all we ought to need to know about it. Our infant children are safe.

But what of those that are older? My child was five years old: is he safe? My boy was eight years old—brave, noble little fellow: is he safe? My little girl of twelve years old, who had never joined the church, and had her faults, and went to school and came home again, singing morning and evening sweeter than birds, and often needed rebuke and watch and care, and suddenly fell under a stroke scarlatina, and died almost without a word, mute: is she safe? My noble child that was fifteen, sixteen, and had much of manhood in him: is he safe?

Do you believe that the justice of universal Love is poorer than the justice of man's love? After an experience of thousands of years, the State says, "I do not consider a man fit to take care of his own business until he is twenty-one years old." Men are not regarded as ripe enough to be fully responsible to the laws of their country before they have reached that age. Some are mature a great deal earlier, but some, not until a great deal later; and some, never, but the State, judging from the average experience of its history, says, "I will not commit to a man his property, and hold him fully

responsible, except through his parents or guardians, until he is twenty-one." It regards him as a minor until then. Not that this is a magic number, and that every one, when he is just twenty-one, is a man; but the average experience on earth dictates that so long as a man is comparatively immature, he ought not to be held to a full responsibility. And is God less tender and less considerate than men?

Do not be afraid to trust your children in the hands of him who died rather than to hurt. God showed his love for us when we were enemies; and now that we are reconciled to him will he be less lenient toward us than he was then? He would rather die than that we should die. He would rather suffer than that we should suffer. Is it not enough that He who is regent is one who would rather suffer himself than inflict suffering on others? That is all I want to know. I am willing to trust my children and myself to a love which would rather suffer than inflict suffering.

Go, then, little ones, singing. Spring is coming. The flowers are everywhere holding up their chalices and sending forth their fragrance toward God; and the birds are flying in every tree with sweet songs. Blessed are they that must part with their children, if they go when everything is singing again. There is a sadness in burying our children in winter. I know; for I have done it. And there is a sadness in burying them in autumn. But when there is resurrection all over the globe; when the hills rejoice; when the clouds themselves speak gladness to the recreated earth; when all the birds, and beasts, and roots, and blades of grass, and flowers, are so many syllables of divine revelation, saying, "Ye live again"—then it is not so hard to send our children home. Blessed are they whose little ones, if they must go, take their flight through all these magnificent symbols of new life, prolonged life, undying life.

Give your children to Christ, and not to fate. Give them to God, having given yourselves to him, and wait, and you shall have them again in over-measure, more beautiful and sweeter, a thousand times.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

OUR Father, we thank thee for that name by which heaven is opened to us; by which we are emboldened to draw near to thee; by which we have, in our own life, a perpetual interpretation of thee.

We bring all our dear children to thee, sure that if thou art Father, then fatherhood in thee means more and better things than it can mean in us. And though we would not compass thee with our weakness, nor transfer to our conception of thee those things which are in us by reason of imperfection, yet all that in us is divine and good we would transfer to our thought of thee, making it still more noble, lifting it up into the eternal sphere, and giving to it infinite proportion, and bounty endless and incomprehensible. We desire to think of thee as loving with an everlasting love. When we look at the selfishness that belongs to our affection, even when it is strongest; when we see how full of mixed emotion is even our love for our children, we rejoice in believing that there is a love super-eminent above all human experience and its phenomena. We rejoice that the love of God is pure and disinterested; that it has no selfishness, and no pride, and no weariness, and no unwisdom; that it sacrifices nothing that is good. We rejoice that by love thou art seeking to lift all up out of degradation, and to purge all from their transgressions; that by love thou art inspiring us toward rectitude; that by love thou art kindling the fire and removing the dross; that by love thou art chastising men to teach them obedience; that by love thou art pruning and taking away whatsoever thing hinders growth and fruitfulness. We rejoice in the executive power and in the cleansing influence of divine love. If in wrath thou wert avenging thyself, we could not endure. Nor could we worship one who was kindled and who burned with an eternal vengeance. We rejoice that there is no such vengeance with thee as there is with men, low, and proud, and selfish, and cruel. We rejoice that all the pain-bearing messengers which come forth from thee come to minister and to mitigate. And we, discerning afar the power of patience, and the power of wisdom, and the power of love, rejoice to believe that thou art triumphing in the eternal sphere. We rejoice that, by-and-by, star shall answer to star, and troop shall follow troop, reporting themselves in the heavenly plain, and bearing testimony. We rejoice that there shall be living witnesses, through ages, and from every place, of the wonder of thy dispensations of mercy and of grace by which they were built up into the stature of perfect men in Christ Jesus, and by which they were made spirits justified and saved.

We commend to thy care those who have brought their little children with them this morning, and who, in the midst of this household of faith, and with the sympathy of their brethren round about them, have offered them up in consecration. We pray that they may feel that they are bound by their obligations, here, and now, to bring up these children with all painstaking and fidelity, in knowledge, in virtue, in truth, in honor, in unworldliness, in reverence and obedience toward God, and in piety. May these seem more to them than all other things. And while they are bringing them up in the world by its instrumentalities, may they have power given them to overcome the world in the things in which it is bad or base, and may they triumph while they serve.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt have compassion upon these little ones. Spare their lives, if that be consistent with thy will; or prepare their parents to yield them up again to him who gave them, if that be thy purpose.

* Immediately following the baptism of children.

And we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the households from which they have come. May they know how great is their privilege, and how great is the bounty of God toward them, in the presence of these little children. They cannot reckon the joys which they have. They never can measure nor interpret their favors and the testimonies of God's kindness toward them in their little ones.

We beseech of thee that in every household where children are thy Spirit may dwell, for their sake, and for their parents' sake. And may these parents, by teaching them the first elements of human knowledge in their helplessness and need, be so exercised by self-denial and by serving, that they shall be themselves taught more than they teach. And we pray that thou wilt grant that all the youth in our midst may grow up pure, strong, and able to endure the world, and to overcome it, by Christian honor, and Christian truth, and Christian purity.

And we pray that thou wilt bless those who are instructing the young—superintendents and teachers in our schools, and the instructors in our Bible-classes. And wilt thou bless all the pupils that are therein.

We thank thee for so wide a field. We thank thee for such glorious harvestings as thou hast granted us. And we pray that thou wilt continue thy divine goodness to us in these regards.

Bless, we pray thee, all the families that are in this parish. May they come up in remembrance before thee. We pray that thou wilt sanctify the joy of every household in which joy reigns. Sanctify the sorrows, also, which come to so many dwellings. Grant, we pray thee, that the intrusion of sorrow may not be to them a sign of God's anger. May it be a celestial visitant to them. Though it be clothed in darkness, may they know that at heart it is light and bright, and brings testimony of God's favor. And may every sorrowing one hear thee saying, Whom I love I chasten, and scourge every son whom I receive. We pray that they may be exercised by the divine hand, and that they may not mourn nor rebel when they are in any wise disciplined by the divine wisdom, but may submit to the will of God as manifested in his providence, gently and sweetly, and be able to say, in all their trouble, I am sustained by the Lord. And may we, here, by joy and sorrow, be better fitted for the tasks that remain for us in this life. May we be prepared thereby for that which must come to us, all of us, before long. May we so look at our households and our affairs in life, and so take account of our states of heart, as to know whether we are at any hour prepared for the coming of the Son of Man, whether we shall go early, or at midday, or late.

We behold on every side the testimony of death. The great are falling on the right and on the left. Thou art not sparing the infant of days. We see borne past us, day by day, the young as well as the aged. Those that are in honor are as open to death as those that are in obscurity. Thou art breaking the stay and the staff of the strong ones. We beseech of thee that all may take heed of thy ministration of death and of life. Through death and life we have solid hope and certitude in Christ Jesus. May we have in ourselves the witness of that acceptance by which we shall look upon death, not calmly alone, but rejoicingly, and, if it may be, longingly. And prepare us, we beseech of thee, when we shall have gone through the brief and mute experience of this life, to break forth on the other side, with new life, a new song, a better heart, a nobler aspiration, and join with the innumerable throng that, night and day, praise thee around about thy throne, giving to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, the praise of our salvation, forever and ever. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

We pray for thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. Grant that it may comfort, enlighten, strengthen, and cheer us. Bless all that are in trouble. Deliver them by faith and hope, out of their trouble; or, if needful for medicine in the soul that they should ache and bear pain, strengthen and comfort them. Draw near to them, and relieve them. And at last, to all of us, way-worn and weary, send a joyful messenger, and say, Come up hither. Then may we lay aside the robe, the weight, the burden, the staff, and the sandal; and may we rise to be forever with the Lord. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

THE BIBLE TO BE SPIRITUALLY INTERPRETED.

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”—
2 Cor. iii. 6.

Paul was thought by the regular pious Jews—by that style of men who, in the old dispensation, talked a great deal about keeping close to the old landmarks, and about walking in the ways of the fathers—to be a very dangerous man. This was strikingly manifest in the scene, to which we have frequently alluded, where James called him to account after he had been preaching some twenty-five years and had gone to Jerusalem, and where he recited to him all the rumors which were being circulated among the churches, to the effect that he was a dangerous man, and had abandoned the faith of Moses. Though Christ had been forty years gone, and though he had been declared to be a sacrifice for all men, Paul thought it meet to put himself right in regard to these old landmarks, for the sake of those Jews who were yet infirm—to show them that he had not broken with the Jewish economy.

If I have been feeding on acorns and roots, and at last have learned to raise wheat, and to eat it, I do not break with the wheat because I go back to the acorns and roots again. They are poor food, but they are better than none; and my eating them does not conflict with the fact that the wheat is better than they are.

Paul had come out into a larger knowledge of the liberty that is inherent in man, and of the grace of God which brings light or freedom; but if he could save any by disabusing them of prejudice, he was willing, for the time being, to have his faith to himself, and to show that the poorer way was not to be despised, for the sake of those who had not yet learned the better.

In our text, he must have seemed to the real regulation Pharisee to have been undervaluing the Bible; for the Pharisees were exceedingly superstitious as to the value of the Old Testament

Scriptures; and here he appeals to the consciousness of living men as authority in matters of Christianity. It may be dangerous ground, according to the way in which it is held; yet it is a universal fact that truth in the living form in Christian experience, is by far a higher authority than any written statement of the truth can be; and Paul took that ground justly. He said:

"Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men; forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter [stuck to, idolized, worshiped] killeth; but the spirit giveth life."

The Jew clung to the Scriptures with a minute scrupulosity which he thought was reverential. It led to formalism and narrowness. Any form in the world, whether of words or of observances, if followed subserviently, will lead to materialism and to gross superstition, or to fetichism.

Paul, full, grand man as he was—one of the half dozen men who stand so high that all ages take their departure from them and steer by them—faithfully warns men against the ruinous idolatry of Scripture, not only here, but elsewhere; as, for instance, in the second of Romans, where he says:

"If the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision, which is by nature, if it fulfill the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

It is not the man that is orthodox according to the very terms of the catechism; it is not the man that is orthodox in holding to the exact form and words of the Bible: it is the man that is orthodox in his spirit and temper and life, that is truly a Christian. Paul says so.

The same is repeated, substantially, in the seventh of Romans:

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."

There are many other passages which I will not recite. These are enough. If this be not a full, fair, true way of taking the Scriptures, I do not know what can be; but to the Pharisees it must have seemed a very dangerous kind of liberty. If they had spoken English, they would have said, "This is a very loose way of thinking and teaching; and there is a great deal of danger in it."

Men have always been afraid of departing one jot or tittle from the physical expositions of the truth; from material ordinances; from regular ecclesiastical formulas; from exact statements of doctrine. They have been a hundred times more afraid of aberration from the definite external statements of truth than of aberration from the inward spirit of Christ Jesus. There are men living now, as there have been in every age, who are scrupulous for the sanctity of the Bible; who would burn themselves and see others burned for the sake of maintaining the integrity of the truth; but who are not at all disturbed by envyings, and bitterness, and censorious judgments, and all ungodliness of spirit. They are not afraid of these things; but they have a conscience for outward observances.

In our day, the Bible is being assailed on every side, directly or indirectly. It always has been; but never so ably, nor so universally, nor from such vantage-ground, as to-day. It is in many cases disbelieved and rejected upon cause shown; and it is still more generally falling into disuse on account of a vague impression that it is full of inaccuracies; and so it is coming to be neglected through indifference.

Now, I regard indifference as rather more fatal than skepticism. There is no pulse in indifference. Skepticism may have warm blood; there is life in it, and therefore power of regeneration; but simple indifference is dead, and therefore fatal.

For one, I believe in the Bible. I believe in it with all my heart. I think I believe in it in just the spirit in which it was intended that the world should believe in it. I do not fear that it will ever be taken away from mankind, though I do fear that thousands will lose the light and comfort of it who might otherwise be blessed by it. As long as the world stands, I think it will be a guide and a comfort. That Book was never so important as it is to-day. Its mission is scarcely begun. It is a light shining in a dark place. I do not believe that its oil has burned out. A guide? Its influence and function will not be ended till the last soul has been guided to the heavenly land. The will of God to this world? Not till that will is done on earth as it is in heaven will it be superseded.

We must, then, take the Bible in its own nature, if we would reap its benefits; and I propose to speak somewhat, this morning, on this subject.

First, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, alike, employ external and physical elements as means of re-adjusting internal manhood. The end and the aim of the Bible is not external, but internal; and where it employs external elements, it employs

them as having relation to internal manhood. The drift of the Book, from Genesis to Revelations, is the building up of men in Christ Jesus. A manhood which is central, royal, divine, is the thing which it aims at. Its object is man's spiritual development and perfection. If it teaches domestic life, if it teaches social obligations, if it teaches civic duties, if it teaches any material elements, it is because all these, in their place and proportion, have relations to the building up of that spiritual manhood which is inherent in men. This being so, I think that no criticism which only touches externals can invalidate the Bible. If it is found to be right in its conception of the inward manhood of men, if it is substantially right in its great aims of building up men inwardly toward God, then no matter what gaps or chasms there may be in the vehicles by which these conceptions are made known to men, the Book will stand. It will be inexpugnable.

Now, look at the view which the Bible gives us of God in that memorable passage in Exodus where he declares to Moses that he is a God of goodness and long-suffering and mercy, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that he will by no means clear the guilty; that he is not indifferent to righteousness and integrity, but that for the sake of men, on account of his love for them, he will have compassion upon them. And look at the view of God which is presented to us by the Lord Jesus Christ, who portrays him as a God who suffered in order that the universe might not suffer, and who is forever bearing care and pain that the universe may escape from suffering and degradation. The view of God which we find in the Bible is that he is a Father; that he is clothed with benignity; and that he is patient with his children, the universal race, in order that they may be saved in their inexperience, in their weakness, and in their wickedness, and brought up into a higher condition, and made heirs of immortality.

The Bible's description of man represents that he is simply a creature born in the flesh, that as an animal he is struggling to develop the angel—the spirit or the spiritual nature—that is in him. Taking the Bible right through, it may be said to be its generic doctrine, respecting man, that he is an earth-born, animal creature, and that he is, by the power of the Spirit of God, developing, through strife, and suffering, and joy, and hope, and faith, a higher nature. It declares man to be eternal. His destiny is represented as being immortality. His line of growth is declared to be away from the flesh and toward the Spirit, by struggle, by conflict, by continuous endeavor, to the end. He is also likened to a ship on a stormy sea, driven to the north and to the south of its

course, but forever coming back to its proper direction, and forever pushing on its way toward its destination. He is represented as beginning at the lowest, and rising steadily toward the highest. Hope, faith, love—these are the absolute qualities, we are told, toward which he is steering, and by which he is living.

Such is substantially the doctrine of the Bible, which had been growing more and more plain down to the time of the New Testament, and which was then effulged in its clearest lines of light. With endless variation of method, with various arguments, and with various illustrations gathered from different kingdoms and from different ages, in remote periods, the grandest line of divine teaching which runs through the Bible is this: that God is the Father of the universe, and that he seeks the development of his subjects, by which they are working up from the lowest estate toward the highest; that from him there is a divine light continually falling upon their hearts, and enkindling in them faith and hope and love, by which they are led onward and upward toward immortality and glory.

Now, such being the Bible, I do not care what may be the different rhetorical elements by which these things are set forth, nor what may be the different intellectual elements by which they are described. Since it contains a faithful description of God, of man, of man's destiny, and of the legitimate motives which are brought to bear for the sake of man's development and final salvation, I am satisfied. The Bible consists, not in the letter, but in the spirit; not in historic forms, but in those spiritual ideas which are given, as far as they may be conveyed by historic forms or external elements. It is the growth of time; and, like all growths in this world, it has the marks of time upon it. With regard to its interior elements, there are no marks of imperfection upon them—certainly, none that it has been in the power of man to discern. It will never go down, therefore, under any mere criticism of its external conditions. You may prove that some of its dates are wrong; you may show that some things in it which are stated as facts never took place; but no man can materially diminish the power of God's Word till he shows that that character of God which is depicted in it is unworthy of belief; or till he shows that the character and destiny of man which are given there are false. If the Governor of the universe is represented there better than we can find it represented anywhere else; if a better understanding of the nature of man is derived from the Bible than from any other source; if the grand economies by which man is educated and made into a higher being are shown in that direction better than

in any other; in other words, if those things which it most concerns man to know of God and of himself are better taught in the Word of God than anywhere else, then you never can pierce it to its harm. You may pierce it to your own harm, but it will stand; for it has that which the world will never let go out.

Therefore, the Bible, to be reached with fatal wound, must be assailed and defeated in its inner spirit—in those views of God, of man, and of human destiny, which constitute its real life. Being sound there, it will stand any amount of shock elsewhere.

When I read the various criticisms that are being made—whether in Germany, or in France, or in England, or in our own land—weighty, and to some murderous—and when, reading them, I find that they have only expended themselves on certain external features of the Word of God, I do not feel the least disturbance. They may take away as much or as little as they please, and it will do no harm.

If a man, having a spite against me, goes into my old orchard, and works industriously all night, raking and scraping on my apple trees; and if I go out in the morning and find the ground covered with the bark, my first thought is of danger to the trees; but when I find that the new, living bark is not touched, that he has only scraped off the old, dead bark, with the worms and insects that were within it and were injuring the trees, I say to him, “Thank you! come again!”

So when I see men assailing the Word of God, and raking down certain dates, and bringing into ridicule certain myths, so long as they stop short of the inner spirit, the vital elements of truth, I do not care; and I say, “The more you rake it, the better I like it.” It is the spirit, and not the letter, that makes it valuable. Let those cling to the letter that worship it; and let those assail the letter that think they can gain any advantage by it; but he who sees in the Word of God, luminous as the sun, the truest justice and the most satisfying view of the Godhead, and a right depicting of himself, and of the meaning of his aspirations, and his heart experiences; of the unwritten poetry which passes through his mind; of the requiem of sighs which his soul utters; of the joys which begin, but do not blossom in his life; of his sorrows which throw out their arms, and seek to lift themselves out of darkness and into light—he need have no fear. Who is afraid that the Bible will be injured so long as it teaches us the spirit of God, the spirit of divine wisdom, the spirit of everlasting love, the spirit of inward purity in distinction from outward impurity; that spirit by which man is evolved from lower stages, step by step, upward and onward, until

he becomes disenthralled of the flesh, and is a son and an angel in the presence of God? And this is what it does when its interior meanings are understood.

When, secondly, we approach the vital truth of the Bible—that which inspiration calls its spirit—we are met by the grand fact that it is a Book which characteristically concerns itself with truths of emotion, of disposition, and of character. When you approach a book of philosophy, you find it to be a book of ideas; but when you approach the Bible, you find that, although there are ideas all through it, they are servitors, and are subordinate. Emotions, dispositions, elements of character—these are the entities of the Bible. If we examine such truths in their nature, we perceive that they cannot be perfectly enclosed in words. We perceive that they are so large, that they are of such infinite variation, and that they are subject to such expansions or contractions, that there is no word in any language, that there are no words in all languages, that can more than point them out. It is by the heart that man believes unto salvation, we are told; and heart-truths can be symbolized or pointed out: but no heart-truth can be perfectly expressed by a word or by words.

The sign-board that stands on a road, and says, "To Goshen," tells you which way to go, but it does not tell you all that lies between you and Goshen. The trees, the streams, the fields, the hills, the beautiful landscapes, are not put on a sign-board. It is merely a board with a hand pointing towards Goshen, and words saying, "Six miles to Goshen."

Now, you never got a word nor a book to tell you all that it indicates or symbolizes. Take the term *sorrow*. All of us have had such an experience of sorrow that when we hear the word we know what it means; we know what class of emotions is referred to; but who that had never known sorrow could put into that word all that goes to make up the lore of sorrow? Take the feeling with which a mother watches, when the stars have gone out, and the sun has withdrawn its shining, and life has lost its luster, the cradle having contained all that she could think of or desire for the time, and tell me, could you put all that goes through that woman's soul during the hours, during the days, during the weeks, during the paralyzed months, into the bounds of that little word *sorrow*? How simple is the word! and how voluminous is the thing that is expressed by it! *Sorrow* stands simply like a hand on a sign-board at the opening of a way, and pointing down the road: but no man may know what *sorrow* means except him who has tasted sorrow, except him who has forded the dark waters; except him who has

been brooded over by clouds that were full of blasting lightnings. Sorrow is *felt*; and if you have felt it, you will know what is meant when you see the word *sorrow*; but otherwise not.

Take the word *joy*. How many experiences there are in connection with joy! How strange are the forms which it assumes! How complex it is! How infinitely various! It is like the windings of a band of music where there are a hundred instruments. And yet, to represent this, you have only this simple word *joy*, which is but a mere hint. You contain in yourself the definition of *joy*. It is the memory of your own experience. It is the glitter of ten thousand influences. And it is the soul that interprets it.

It is said that words *express* what they represent. No, words do not express anything. We might spell them backward, and it would be all the same if we had always spelled them backward. The words are nothing. They are dead. The thing which they express must be a living thing in your consciousness at present, or in your memory of the past.

Take *peace*. Who can interpret by any word that which, in its sweetness, in its depth, in its strange transformation of the inward life, the apostle says "passeth all understanding?" *The peace of God passes all understanding*; and yet, to represent that, what have we but this small word *peace*? To represent *faith* or *hope*, to represent *love*, which is the greatest of all, what have we? If we have felt sorrow, or joy, or peace, or faith, or hope, or love, then these words remind us of what we have felt; they remind us of what we have known or seen; but that is all they can do.

The Bible does not aim, then, at absolute and perfect teaching, since the infinite cannot be compressed within the finite. No words can teach you any more than you have the foundation for in your inward economy. No formula of mathematics teaches me anything, because I have not the inward knowledge which is necessary to enable me to comprehend it. I read it as blindly as a child reads the deepest passages of the Bible. The child is not yet opened up to the seventh and the eighth of Romans. All these passages are to him mere sounds; and he learns them as he learns the qualities of which these are the mere signs and hints and symbols. This is clearly implied in Scripture itself. It declares that wicked men, alienated by wicked works, cannot understand the Word of God. The natural man understands not the things of the Spirit; neither indeed can he. They are spiritually discerned. They are experientially learned. In other words, the understanding is darkened when men give themselves to wickedness, and it is enlightened when they give themselves to goodness. In other words, the inter-

pretation of the Bible is inward, and is according to the nature which you are carrying, and the life which you are living. Those who would understand must qualify themselves for understanding by being right-minded.

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." "If any man will do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

Doing is interpreting, on this principle.

The interpretation of the Bible, then, is required, in the first place, to be through physical representations—through archæology; through history; through geography; through science. These are, in their place, useful; but they are subordinate. They prepare the way for you to interpret, by your spirit, the meaning of the Bible itself—namely, that internal element of which language is the mere vehicle. The knowledge of this depends upon your own state of mind, and upon your own feelings. Knowledge is but a mail-bag. Ideas are the messages that are in it, and are carried by it.

This is the reason why the Bible is void to all literalists. No man who is a stickler for the letter can ever understand the Bible. Those men who have apparently the most reverence are farthest from that which they worship. It is possible for a man to be scrupulous about the text, and about the Book itself, and to treat it as if it were a god, and yet be absolutely void of all knowledge of it, and be outside of it, and be, to all intents and purposes, a rejector of it; for it is not by the letter that you can understand it. It is only by the spirit that it can be understood; and you can only understand it by that spirit in you which is like unto it.

Looking at this thought on the other side, what if a man should judge of his fruit-trees as many judge of the Bible, who say to me, "Do you believe all the miracles of the Old Testament? Do you believe that iron swam? Do you believe that Baalam's ass spoke?" "Do you believe the thousand things that are laid down in this clumsy, ill-connected history?" It makes very little difference whether I do or do not. I do not think the Bible stands or falls by any such thing as that.

I go into my orchard with a man, and say, "I have Newtown pippins here—five hundred trees of them." He says, "I should like to see them." The first tree I show him is a very large one, that is split down by its own weight, and has half fallen to the ground; and the man says, "Do you tell me that that is a Newtown pippin tree, split down in that way?" The next tree he looks at he examines with a microscope, and says, "Look here! do you see these nits and eggs? and do you call this a good apple-tree, filled with insects as it is?" We next come

to a shaggy tree, full of water-growths; and he says, "What kind of an apple-tree do you call that?" I should say that a man was pomologically a fool who asked such questions—though I should say it politely! For the way to find out whether a tree is a Newtown pippin tree or not, is not to look at the tree, but at the fruit. If it bears Newtown pippins, it may be fair or scrawny, it may be high or low, it may have a smooth bark or a bark full of scars and gashes, it may be homely or handsome, it may have come from this nursery or that, it is a Newtown pippin tree. I do not say that it would not be worth my while, in selecting trees for an orchard, to consider these questions before planting them; but I say that when they are once planted, it is by the fruit that they bear, and not by the trees themselves, that we are to judge whether they are what they claim to be or not.

Now, in regard to the Word of God—that tree which has been growing, forest-like, for ages—you may find as many external faults as you please; but if you have a theory which makes those faults fatal, so much the worse for your theory. I say that a book which carries a right notion of God and man, and gives us such marks and indications of the future that the best things in us rise up and greet them, and that we are brought into light, and peace, and joy, and salvation—I say that such a book is sound; I say that it is beyond criticism; and I say that he who spends his time with scalpel or scalping-knife on its outside history is not wise at least—and when we say that a man is not wise, we mean that he is a fool!

I remark, again, that no man would be shocked, if, turning aside a moment from this line of thought, I were to say that in order to understand botany you must go out of the book. You cannot understand what is in a book on botany till you go outside of it, and see that to which it refers in the fields and in the woods. I say to a man, "Do you think your botany contains all the plants in creation?" "Yes—yes, sir." No, it does not, one of them. It contains only a hint of them. I would like to see a botany that could take in the whole vegetable kingdom. If you want to understand botany, you must take your book and go out and examine the plants of which it treats.

And that which is true of botany is just as true of natural history. Take Cuvier's works, and Agassiz's works, and the works of other naturalists. The animal kingdom is not in them. Neither insects, nor fishes, nor birds, nor the mammalia are there. Where are they? Everywhere, round and round the globe. The book is only a collection of symbols and descriptions. If you want to

know about these things you must go and look at them. You must study the book to understand the thing, and you must study the thing to understand the book. You must verify the description by the life, everywhere and always.

The same is true of geography. You do not understand geography in the book, if you do not understand the elements of it outside of the book.

The same is true of a chart of the sea. No man has a chart wet, with all the ocean in it. A chart is a dry bit of paper with lines drawn upon it. There are no capes or bays or harbors in it. The world of hydrography is outside of charts.

But if I were to say to you that you cannot interpret the Bible except by going out of the Bible, many of you would be shocked. And yet, that is in the very line of the instances which I have been enumerating. The Word of God speaks of living things; it deals with spiritual things; and we cannot understand the things of the spirit by looking on paper with printing upon it. You must use that Book so that it will help you as a chart helps the mariner; as a work on geography helps the student of geography; as a treatise on natural history helps the learner of natural history; and as a botany helps those who are studying the vegetable kingdom. The Word of God is the guide, it is the law, it is the system of justice; but the thing itself is not in the paper nor in the type: it is in the living heart. As the apostle said, you are Bibles written, not with pen and ink, nor on tables of stone, nor on paper, but with the Spirit of God on fleshly tables of the heart. It is your experience that interprets Scripture. It is living facts in the consciousness of living men that constitute the meanings of the Word of God. Without these there could be no just interpretation.

The Bible, then, in regard to all its physical elements, is to be interpreted precisely as any other book is. When it says "unicorn," or "elephant" (if it says elephant), or "crocodile," or "lamb," or "wolf," or "sheep," or what not, there is no animal that rises up out of the page to show you what it means. You must go out of doors, if you have not been there already, and see what these names mean. If it says "mountain," it is the mountain itself that interprets the meaning. If it says "sky," or "ocean," or "river," or "warrior," or "army," you must see the person or thing which is named before you can understand what is meant.

The same is true in respect to historic elements, where the Bible refers to histories. We must investigate those histories. In the same way we must go to the things of which it speaks.

And likewise, when Scripture speaks of certain states of mind,

the mind, in those states, must necessarily come before our thought and investigation in order that we may understand what is taught.

Hence, human life is God's commentary on the Bible. God's providence is a perpetual revelation. It throws its light of interpretation upon the old revelation of the letter. It opens up in man's experience the inner realm of truth. It gives us light by which we are to understand that which is in the Word of God.

Now, when I preach to you that you are to take the providence of God, in the successive experiences of the Church, and carry it back into the Word, to give light to the interpretation, there are many who say, "This is a very dangerous doctrine. It is putting human experience above the Bible." But I say, No. I say, in the spirit of the apostle, that God is, by the Holy Ghost, developing in the lives and experiences of men, those states of feeling and emotion which the Bible hints at and authenticates. Its hints and indications are to be followed up. Knowledge is to be acquired from the thing itself, and not from the letter. It is the spirit which maketh alive: it is the letter which killeth. And a man may peruse the Book as much as he pleases, he may hold the Bible before his eyes till he is Bible-blind, he may run himself into stupidity and ignorance by worshiping the Bible, if he only looks at the letter, or the sentence; whereas, if he takes the letter in one hand, and life in the other, they will throw light respectively on each other; and so to both of them will come true illumination.

"But," say men, "do you not, by this process, leave the whole Word of God subject to the reason of man?" You cannot leave it to anything else. I aver, as a fundamental maxim, that where there is no reason there can be no revelation. I would like to see the Ten Commandments comprehended by a tortoise. I would like to see the Gospel made intelligible to an opossum in the moonlight woods. I would like to see the teachings of Scripture understood by an ox browsing in the field. It cannot be done. No creature can receive the revelations of the Bible without reason. And why can man receive these revelations? Because he has reason. That is the very door, the very window, the very instrumentality by which you come into communion with God through revelation. You cannot do it in any other way.

The Bible, then, is to be interpreted by going right to life. It is only a help which God has given to man. In the Bible, God is only a Teacher by the Holy Ghost.

"But," it is asked, "are you not liable to make mistakes?" I should think you were. I do not know of anybody that does not make mistakes. The eyes are good evidence, are they not? and yet

there are no things that you make more mistakes with than the eyes. There is not one man in a hundred that sees what he looks at. Bring ten men separately into court, and let them give their testimony as to a thing that they have all seen, and you will find that each one saw differently from the others. It is not what a man has in his eye, but what he has back of his eye, that determines what he shall see. That man who is full of wrath sees what wrath colors; that man who is full of jealousy, what jealousy inspires; that man who is full of love, what love illuminates; that man who is full of indignation, what indignation points out. The eye is simply a gate; and it goes backward and forward at the beck of servants clad in all manner of livery. You are often deceived in the use of the eye. Knowledge comes by living. True wisdom is the result of blunders in life. Progress is made by continuous experiments, accompanied by disasters as well as successes, this way and that way.

Men say, "You must not trust your reason." No, not absolutely. How much we are opposed to the Pope at Rome! Would that we were half as much opposed to the Pope at home. I am fallible, and you are fallible, surprising as it may seem. We assert a thing, and we are certain of it. "Everybody," we say, "ought to be satisfied in his own mind." A man may be satisfied in his own mind for the time being; but no man can be absolutely sure. We are fallible at the very best; we see through a glass darkly at the very best—whether we prophecy, or have faith so that we could remove mountains. The instrumentation by which we receive the truths of the Bible is flawed. It is like glass which is wrinkled, and has warts in it. Though we see objects through it, they are out of perspective, and so out of proportion. Our knowledges are all more or less marred. But when I hear persons say that we must not use our reason, and that we must take the Bible just as we find it, I say that you cannot, unless you have a reason to use on it.

"There," says the priest, "we have the advantage over you Dissenters and Protestants; we have the voice of the Church." But I, with all humility, say to his reverence, "How can we use the voice of the Church without reason? How can that voice teach us, except through the ear-gate and the eye-gate—in other words, except through reason? In every system, and under all circumstances, you must come to that as a last resort. You are responsible to God, who has said, 'Come, let us reason together.' You are bound to reason; but you are to avoid the conceit of reason. Cursed be the man who relies upon his understanding, and puts

his weight on it unduly, without a consciousness that it needs correction all the time. No man ever went across the sea that he was not perpetually correcting his reckonings. Ten thousand influences in the heavens above and in the waters beneath, are continually disturbing one's compass, and he must be all the while adjusting it, and then he will only approximate a direct course.

Now, so far as our having absolute truth is concerned, it is out of the question. No man can hold the truth in its length and breadth, and height and depth, so as to say, "I have it absolutely." That is a very different thing from holding it so that it shall be a light to your path, bread for your hunger, water for your thirst, and a staff to lean on. I may not know what God is, but I may know that he is infinitely good and merciful. I may not know what goodness and mercy are in such a Being; I have not seen these qualities except in an adulterated state. I am like a man who never saw gold except in quartz—in little veins; who never saw it purified, and made into coins, and stamped. Goodness and mercy among men are poor things. They are but dross, as we see them. But I know that these things summed up in God, in the vast expanse of the divine nature, which stretches without a cloud from eternity to eternity, must be glorious beyond our conception in this world. I cannot understand the whole of God's being, but I can understand enough of it to trust it. I cannot understand all the teachings of God in regard to moral government and moral accountability, but I can understand enough of them to take from them my general direction. That is the whole aim of the Bible with reference to me. It is seeking to inspire in me an ambition for spiritual things, and to bring me, every day, toward spiritual manhood, toward divine love, toward disinterestedness; and this I can understand.

Once more. We see, in the line of these remarks, why it is that when men study the Word of God we exhort them to do it with prayerfulness; with a right state of mind. We do it because the co-operation of that which is best in you with that which is best in the Bible is to constitute your knowledge of Scripture. No man can come to the Bible with a distempered heart, no man can come to it with an animal life, no man can come to it with belluine, raging passions, and then understand those truths which belong to the higher nature. He who would study the Word of God to the best advantage must prepare himself for it with prayer and meditation, and keep his heart in the right condition, as the astronomer polishes his glasses and keeps his instruments in order for his work. Temper, and selfishness, and pride, and arrogance, and self-conceit, are to the

student of the Bible what clouds and mists are to the astronomer. Because the Bible must be studied by the heart and through the heart, the heart must be kept right. Therefore it is that you must be pure in heart, pure in thought, pure in feeling, and by prayer bring yourself into that higher realm where you will, if anywhere, see God.

Religion is experimental, then; and no man can argue scientifically against it without putting himself into the conditions of religion itself. I have said that the Word of God is essentially spiritual in its interior nature; and that we are to interpret it by the experience of our own best inward being; and that though there are liabilities to error in it, there are no more there than in everything else that we investigate. When scientific men tell me that the great historic facts of the Bible are not to be relied upon, I tell them that the Bible does not consist of historic facts. I think I may almost say that you might take out from it every vestige of historic facts—if you would leave the revelations of the character of God, of the nature of man, and of human destiny—without materially diminishing its value. The historical part of Scripture is not very important. If this were gone, the essential part—the experience of holy men in every age of the world—would still remain. It would be more difficult to get at it and use it; but the validity of the Bible would not be destroyed. It is not altogether, or chiefly, composed of chronology or of facts.

A scientific man says, "I do not believe in your Bible." Perhaps you do, more than you think. If I were to bring an experiment of Agassiz, or an experiment of Faraday, to a test, it would not do for me to stand outside of all the conditions of that experiment, and reason *a priori*. No man would accept my test unless I performed it according to the rules laid down by Agassiz or Faraday. If an astronomer says, "Here is a fact," and I would examine it, I must go through the process which he prescribes, or I am not competent to be his critic. If a chemist says, "Such and such facts fall out under such and such circumstances," I am obliged to observe those circumstances in testing it. If a man says, "Such and such things are true in respect to the animal creation," I am not capable of criticising his statement unless I verify or falsify it. And no man is competent to criticise the Bible if he is not in those conditions which are required to enable him to understand its aim and purpose. If a man would be qualified to criticise the Bible, he must live a life of spirituality; he must live a life of fervor and devotion; he must have an actual experience in spiritual things; and that experience must predominate over the lower experience, as the light

of the sun predominates over the light of the stars. The soul and its conditions must triumph over the body and its conditions. There is a witness of the Spirit of God, a moral intuition, which is not infallible, but which comes nearer to infallibility than the lower forms of reason. If you would criticise the Bible, you must not look at its external features, but at its internal qualities; as, if you would judge of me, you must not look at my coat, but at my thought-power, and will-power. And I declare that no man can set aside the Word of God on grounds of science who cannot satisfactorily show that he has taken the Word of God where it stands, as it is, and according to its own conditions. If the man has felt his inferiority; if he has felt his sinfulness; if he has felt a yearning that did not know how to help itself; if he has felt the influence and outburst of the divine nature in his soul, let him doubt God if he wants to; but sooner will men who have found diamonds or pearls throw them away, than he who has felt what is the real Spirit of God will reject it.

The Word of God, to those that are blind and unsearching, is a hidden Word; but to those who seek its treasures, it is a Word of hope and power and love; and I am not afraid that the world will ever be content to go without it. There is yet too much sorrow; too much disappointment; too much groping in darkness; too much stumbling; too much misery at noonday, turning the heart of man to midnight; too much that will implore God for help. There is no Book so full of sympathy for sorrow, or of hope for the sorrowing, as this blessed Word of God.

Take it, then, not by the rind; take it not by the leaves of the tree on which it grew: take it by its inward substance, by its spirit of power, into your living, positive, personal experience, and go your way rejoicing, till God shall speak to you, no longer darkly, through signs and symbols, but face to face.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE bless thy name, O our Father, that we may draw near to thee, what time all human help fails; what time our reason itself, too feeble, fails to discern the way. For thou art the universal Guide, and all things most intricate to us are plain and simple before thee. Thou art from eternity, and art to eternity. Nothing is that was before thou wert; and there shall be nothing in time to come except by thy will. All things are naked and open before thee. Thou art God, Ruler, and dost control all things by thy will and power. And thou art our Father. We are heirs with Jesus Christ to an eternal inheritance with thee. All things, now, are ours. Not to those that rise not, not to those that are unable to take them, do they belong. To

those that sit in darkness, and will not see, there is no sun. To those that will not come forth and behold the beauty of things without, there is no comeliness in nature. And yet it is there for those that will behold and take it. And for all those who have the desire and will to rise up and call upon the name of the Lord; for all those who trust thee, and love thee, and lean toward thee, are all things—whatever there is in time, and whatever there is in the eternal sphere. Thou art theirs, and they are thy companions.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt bring in upon our understanding, this morning, the truths of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. How great is the blessing of his influence by which we are brought from darkness in nature to the light of God in nature, and in his Word fully interpreted! We rejoice that we are no longer alienated from thee, and that we no longer turn our faces downward to find food beneath. We rejoice that we are called of God, and are drawn by the sweet Spirit of divine love to look upward, and to partake of that bread and that water of life which come down from heaven to all that hunger and thirst.

Grant, this morning, we pray thee, that we may enter somewhat upon the privileges and prerogatives which belong to us as Sons of God. Though we have no visible ornament, though we have no outward insignia, though there is nothing external that tells what we are, may we feel the crown upon our heads. May we feel the scepter of power in our hands. May we feel that we have control of our hands. May we feel that by patient continuance in well-doing, by faith, by hope, by love, we may gain the victory, and maintain it most gloriously until the end of life, until the final triumph, when we reach the land of the blessed. Grant, we beseech of thee, this morning, that we may have some conception of that blessed estate which they enjoy who dwell beneath the shadow of thy wings, whose hope and trust are in God, and who live by that faith which works by love.

Draw near, this morning, O Lord, to these thy servants who are waiting in thy presence, and do for each the thing which thou seest to be most needful for him, whether it be to check or to incite; to put down or to lift up; to send light or to give greater darkness; to cause singing to break forth or to bring those tears which are remedial. Grant that every one in thy presence may be dealt with, as thou, merciful in love, seeing the end from the beginning, and knowing what preparations are necessary for the life which is to come, thinkest to be most fit for thine own children. Love us, and then chastise us or caress us; crown us, or put us in sackcloth; lift us up on high, or cast us down in abasement. Deal faithfully with us that we may know that thou art caring for us. Humble us or exalt us, chastise us or reward us, according to what thou seest to be our highest good; and so guide us and prepare us for happiness and glory in the future.

Be near, we beseech of thee, to any who are sitting in afflictions; whose hearts sink within them, and whose eyes are as fountains of tears. O Lord, may they not dwell in a weary land forever more. Let not their faith fail them. Though sorrow abides in the night, joy comes in the morning. Bring the morning to those who long have been as watchers waiting for the morning star. O thou bright and morning Star, draw near to any who are carrying burdens, and who, with various apprehensions, are seeking to fulfill their duties in life. We pray that they may know the art of resting themselves in God. May they know how to be interested in earthly things, and to be faithful to the end in that to which in thy providence thou hast called them; and yet may they walk as those who are not burdened nor distressed, casting their care on Him who careth for them.

We pray for all those, this morning, who are exercised in their souls and thoughts for their beloved—for their companions; for their children; for

their parents; or for their friends who are far away. Be especially near to those who are strangers, and whose hearts yearn for those whom they have left behind, and bring them very near to God—their fathers' God—the God that cares for all—the God who cares for them because they care for others as well as themselves. We beseech of thee that they may, in thy sanctuary, this morning, feel that thou art near to those who are remote from them. And may they feel, not that they are foreigners, nor exiles, nor strangers, but that they have found their home in the house of the Lord.

We pray for all who are disturbed in their faith; for those who know not what to believe; for those who are wandering, but do not love to wander; for those who are on a troubled sea, beset with storms and currents which they cannot understand. We pray that thou wilt come to them walking upon the water. Enter thou into the ship, and bring them speedily to the land. Grant, we pray thee, that to every one of them may be revealed the love of God in Christ Jesus, which is the sum of all wisdom and the richest of all possessions.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all those who labor in word and doctrine in our midst; upon all those who are in responsible relations to our Sunday-schools and Bible-classes. May the teachers, and superintendents, and officers be filled with faith, and love, and patience, and long-suffering kindness. And as thou hast blessed the administration of thy servants in years gone by, still continue to bless their sowing and their reaping.

We pray that thou wilt bless all those, in other churches, who are joined with us in labors and desires for the reformation of morals, for the elevation of the times, for the purification of laws, and for the advance of those great principles on which depends the life of the world. O Lord, we pray that the envyings, the rivalries, the fruits of evil passions, which have so long marred and wounded the glory of the Church of Christ, may be taken out of the way, and that the spirit of faith, co-operative zeal, and unfeigned love, and gentleness, and meekness, and humility may be found everywhere among thy people. Spread abroad the light of knowledge. Especially, give it to those that are sitting in the region and shadow of death; to those who are emancipated, but are not brought up to the measure of the stature of men in Christ Jesus.

We pray for all thy people who are scattered over this land and over other lands, and who are changed in their relations; for all those who are without the truth and without the Gospel. May the light of God as it shines on the face of Christ Jesus be beheld by all this great people; and may that which thou art doing for us, and upon which the eyes of the world look wistfully and longingly, be blessed to the diffusion of knowledge and of religion, and to the growth of mankind. Wilt thou make men so large that they cannot be bound? Wilt thou make them too strong for the despot? Cast out that which is base. Exalt that which is good. Have compassion and mercy upon the poor and outlying millions throughout the globe. Make haste, and bring in that promised day when all the world shall see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be the praise, forever more. *Amen.*

REVELATION A STIMULUS TO HUMAN REASON.

“That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”—Rom. vii. 6.

A large part of mankind are morally and intellectually lazy. They prefer to reap the benefit of thought without thinking; to have the paths of duty laid down for their feet so that they shall have no more trouble about right and wrong than the engine has about the way in which it shall travel. Night and day the locomotive finds its track laid down for it; and after forty years it is not a whit more intelligent than it was in the beginning. Men would be glad to have the path of duty as hard, as rigid, as invariable and as narrow as is the iron of the railway. Then, how they could sail off, and never make a mistake! unless a switch were left wrong; and that would not be their fault. Everybody wants to go right without any difficulty. “Give me this water that, if a man take, he shall not thirst again; that I need not come hither to draw,” said the woman. Everybody wants water, and nobody wants the trouble of drawing it. This is as true spiritually as it is temporally. Men would be glad to have all parts of their life reduced to customs. They would be glad to have a church that should arrange their worship and their duty, and make them plain. They want just such things to do, and just so many of them, to be done just so often. They want the when, the where, and the what laid down with that absolute certainty with which Babbage’s calculating machine brings out figures and results.

Men have the idea that a perfect moral character is one in which every faculty is like a wheel in a clock which is so arranged that, being once wound up, it starts off, and goes on ticking all the day long, and strikes at the appointed hours without any mistake. Their idea of being perfect is, never to go wrong. They have very

little conception of quality, of executive power, of self-registering intelligence, or of personal control. They have very little thought of true manhood. Their idea is, as I have said, never to go wrong; and the best way to do that, is not to go at all. Things that are dead never go wrong. Stones never go wrong. Last year's stalks of expended vegetables never go wrong. The only thing that goes wrong is that which has life. But life force, versatile, complex, organized, and under voluntary control—that scarcely enters into men's conception of the idea of true manhood.

The majority of men want a priesthood. Say as much as you please about the objections of men to being priest-ridden; if they do not want to be priest-ridden, they want a priest to ride. Men want some one to fix things for them. They do not like the trouble of fixing things for themselves. People like to eat, but they do not like to cook. So men want a church that shall settle their religion for them; and they revile those churches that do not do it. They contrast them with those that do. They want to lean on their fellow-men. They want to have those things which appertain to the higher relations of life settled for them, so that in the minor circles of life they can have their own way, and be at ease. And of course this spirit will lead them to a constant perversion of the sacred Scriptures.

It was precisely this narrow, unreasoning idolatry of the law in the Old Testament, that Paul combatted. It was at this that he aimed some of his severest sentences. It was against this that he excited intense remonstrance. Jesus himself cast his teachings in the very highest mould.

It is the distinctive peculiarity of the teachings of our Saviour that they cannot be taken literally. Therefore they cannot be interpreted easily; and they never can be explained so that you can say about them, "There, that is fixed and settled forever." I will defy any man to take the simplest form of Christ's instructions, if he undertakes to follow them logically, clear through to the end, and not be stirred up by them to act as a perpetual legislator, and subject them to a court of adjudication on account of their difficulties. They do not settle the minds of men: they excite them. They do not end controversies: they produce them. As you will see before I get through, they demand the exercise, in every one, of a rational judgment, acting under the influence of right moral feeling.

No book in the world is so abusable as the New Testament. No book is so helpless against assault, if men choose to pervert it. It is subject to perversion, facile, various, endless.

This was the instruction of the writer to the Hebrews, whoever he was—namely, that men must think; that they must not be passive recipients either of custom, or of rules, or of dogmas, or of anything else; that they must vitalize whatever they take hold of, and impress their judgment upon it.

“When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness [that is, undisciplined—not used to handling]: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

This is the idea that he had of a true manhood—one that was waked up; one that was disciplined by actual practice; by the use of the investigating faculties; by the use of the judgment and moral sense. His idea was that one who had attained true manhood was one who had become accomplished; who was practically expert in determining what was true and what was false, what was right and what was wrong, what was good and what was bad, what was high and what was low. It was his idea that a true man was to be a judiciary in respect to his immediate sphere of duty, and in respect to his duty in his social connections with those that are around about him; and that he was so to employ the Word of God as to receive from it hints and intimations and helps, so that, by the independent use of his own God-given reason and God-established conscience, he should be able to determine, in a manly way, what was right and what was wrong, and follow them.

It is this kind of self-registered manhood that the Bible is aiming at, and that the Old Testament has failed to produce, but that the New Testament is working out, through discipline and management, for men; and if men fail of attaining it, it will be because the Scripture is interpreted in the old Levitical spirit, and not in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.

This passage is the recognition of the habitual freedom and activity of that inspiration of God which cannot be understood without study and labor. The principles of moral life cannot be applied without a certain degree of careful thought, each one for himself, in his own place, and in the exigencies of his personal daily life. Nor can any man, in doing this, get rid of perplexities, of doubts, of difficulties, and at times of mistakes.

In interpreting the New Testament, as men are made, and as it is constructed for their use, doubts and uncertainties are indispensable. The complications which we meet in connection with the duties of our practical every-day life imply the same

thing. Men will be uncertain, for a time, as to what is right and what is wrong. They will be uncertain, for a time, as to how to carry out the precepts of Christian life. This uncertainty belongs to human experience. It is a part of the divine economy. You would like to get rid of it; but you never will, except by methods that will unman you. For it is by the exercise of ourselves, it is by the development of our faculties, it is by *use*, it is by discerning truth and applying it to ourselves, that we are to unfold and grow to Christian manhood. The power of self-control and legislative freedom in selecting methods of attaining right ends, and the light of moral intuition which follows the remitting of subjects to constant revision and rejudgment, are the noblest forms of mental activity which as yet we are acquainted with.

I shall now select a few instances from the New Testament, to illustrate the general statements which I have made. I shall not take those parts of Scripture which are confessedly difficult; nor shall I take that language which is confessedly mystical; nor shall I take those passages which are so spiritualized as to be supposed to be above the reach of ordinary understandings. On the other hand, I propose to select the language of Christ himself. I propose to select that language which has reference, not to interior and spiritual states, but to outward and physical life. I propose, indeed, to take the Sermon on the Mount—a sermon which is universally accepted as a marvel of ethical instruction by all parties in the Church, and just as much by all parties out of the Church. Those who reject, as well as those who receive, the Bible as a revelation of God, take ground of admiration for the Sermon on the Mount, and put high value on its teachings. That Sermon is said to be universal; and in this respect it is so—that it is as much believed by atheists as by Christians.

Now, I aver that there is no part of Scripture, from beginning to end, that it is more impossible to interpret at its face without thought, without study, and without a constant perplexing response, than this very Sermon on the Mount. And if this is true of the more outward, ethical instructions of Christ, how much more will it be true of his higher instructions, such as those which are recorded by John!

I cannot now go into the full discussion of all the points which I have raised. I shall propose, if my life be spared, at a later day, to take up the political economy of the Sermon on the Mount in a series of discourses. However that may be, I can only, this morning, touch upon it.

First, consider the teaching of Christ on the subject of the use

of physical force—in regard to the right of a man to defend himself by the employment of other than moral agencies.

“I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.”

Here are the two great elements of personal safety, and the safety of property rights and interests; and the command is explicit in regard to them both. If any man attack you, do not defend yourself; submit. If he wants your coat, give him more. Let him take it. Do not fight for your property. And if he smite you, instead of resisting, turn the other cheek.

This would seem to be very clear. Certainly you cannot make language more explicit. Yet I say that if you were to undertake to carry it out literally, you would pervert human society so that there could be no such thing as Christianity in the world. I affirm this, not theoretically, but as the result of the revelation of God's providence among men, and as a fulfillment of God's teaching in revelation—that great, unending and perpetual revelation that is going on in the human race. It would destroy the whole framework and order of society. I will not say that there could be no armies—that, of course, you understand; but there could be no police; there could be no government; there could be no resisting the animal violence, the belluine passions of the undeveloped masses of mankind. And if there is no right to use physical force in the individual, then there can be no right to use physical force in the family, none in the city, none in the state, and none in the nation. If there is no right to use physical force, then anybody that has anything that is valuable to a rude, unprincipled man, must lie still and let that which is animal among men creep over all that is moral and intelligent and noble in the world. It would remand the race to barbarism. It would leave it to the mercy of an unregulated force, not always in action, but potential, and lying latent, and ready for action.

Men are brought into morality by drill, by disciplinary force. A government of physical force is adapted to mankind in their early days. And when they have been developed, it is fear of physical force that holds them in such a state of obedience that the sword may be sheathed, and that the licitor's fasces may be laid aside.

According to the strict interpretation of this passage, we are not to resist evil. Do you think it would promote the morality of the world to act upon that interpretation? If you were walking the street, and rude, violent men should assail children and women, and you should put your hands in your pockets, or over your

shocked eyes, and go past, and not interfere, would it promote morality? To publish the proclamation to all the brutal lusts throughout the world, "Do what you have a mind to; nobody can resist you"—would that promote morality? If it is wrong to resist the stroke of the hand; if it is wrong to resist the passions of men; if it is wrong to resist evil throughout the whole scale, then we have no right of protection or safety.

But is not this principle given up? Do we think we must not resist evil? How about the Modocs, and the pioneer settlers within their reach? Would it tend to Christianity to say to the savage Indians, "Destroy the cottages, and overrun the helpless villagers," and lift no hand to prevent slaughter, or punish the perpetrators of the deed? The whole Christian world has taken the view that brutal violence should be resisted. If there be one thing certain, it is that, whatever Christianity has lost or gained, whatever it has neglected or done, fighting has been one of its favorite ethical pursuits. Notwithstanding this apparently explicit command, forbidding resistance to evil, there never before were such elaborate organizations and arrangements for contesting evil as there are now. Society has been built on the principle of physical force and resistance, from the time of Christ to this day. And whatever triumph has been achieved, whatever progress has been made in civilization, is due, not to the non-resistant principle, but to the resisting power which men have used. There have been some who have not employed this power. There have been single voices lifted up in opposition to it. There have been a few sects organized in favor of non-resistance. In our day, there are the Friends, who adhere to this doctrine. But I doubt whether they can hold their ground. I doubt whether, during the last civil war, they thought they could hold their ground. But the question is not settled by the experience of these people. I admit their worth, and the beauty of their lives. I admit that there are many things about their example which are transcendently desirable. I honor them, and reverence them, and in many respects would be glad to follow in their footsteps, if I could. But their prosperity does not prove anything. If every man in the United States had been a Friend, and if all had acted in accordance with the principles of the Friends, and if then this nation had been populated, and had gone through its colonial history, and through its conflicts with the Indians, and through its civil strifes, and successfully maintained the government; if the nation had developed and risen to its present degree of prosperity with its policy and procedure in the hands of the Friends, acting according to their views on the sub-

ject of non-resistance, it would have been a settling of the question ; but you will observe that the Friends are only a handful of men, within the sphere of organized law, formed on the principle of physical force. They are like persons inside of a fort, who will not serve the guns of the fort, but who take its protection. They are guarded by the laws and by the police. The hands of magistrates have taken physical violence out of the hands of the individuals in the community ; but physical violence is not taken out of the way. Resistance by outward force is better organized and better attained in the hands of a few than it would be in the hands of the whole community ; but it exists notwithstanding. Therefore, whatever the system of the Friends may illustrate—and it has illustrated many things that we ought not to forget—it does not illustrate that human affairs can be conducted on the absolute principle of non-resistance. It does not touch that question.

That in a far-off state, that in the ripeness of human development, the law of non-resistance will have a universal application, I think to be more than likely ; but that it should have a universal application now is not possible.

If I were to point out, in a book of household economy, in the month of June, what it was best to do with pippins, and you should go out and pick your pippins, which were about as big as peas, and bring them into the house, and undertake to treat them according to the receipt laid down in that book for the treatment of pippins in November, what success and what products would you have ? That the final outcome of government by force, and government by force mixed with moral influence, that the ultimate result of forcible and partially forcible means employed for the development and civilization of men, will be one in which we can by reason and moral sense govern mankind, I believe ; though I cannot say that I am certain of it. I think it highly probable that, by-and-by, when the final condition is reached, the world will be able to get along without the administration of physical punishment ; but that time has not yet arrived. As far as circumstances will permit, we are to dispense with it, and no farther.

We do this in the household. We govern our children with reference to their ultimate condition, and we use physical force in their development according to its requirements. And so it should be in governing the world. Just as far as it is practicable to guide men and nations in our day on principles of moral influence and intelligent reason, and not by force, it is our duty to do it. In other words, this precept of Christ, if taken in its spirit, is one of the noblest that was ever uttered ; but if taken according to the

letter, in the present condition of the times, it kills. We are to come into the newness, the largeness of the spirit. This is the law of love which Christ gave to men—the law that will suffer rather than inflict suffering. Just so far as in your judgment, enlightened by experience and by reasoning, you can dispense with lower physical force, and rely upon these higher instruments, you are to do so; but no man should divest himself of lower physical force until he has power of control by upper and spiritual influences. Force, if you must; love, if you can.

On every man, then, rests the responsibility of education and interpretation. There is no law, no rule, on this subject. You say, "When may I give up physical force?" I cannot tell you. I am not a priest. The thing has not been catalogued and laid down. All the possible conjunctions of circumstances have not been inventoried. And if they had been, I would not let you know it. I would say, "It is a part of the business of your life to find out the way for yourself. You are to make progress by your own efforts."

A boy that has no inventive talent; that is not thoughtful; that is forever hanging on to his father, and asking, "How shall I do this?" and, "How shall I do that?" is pushed off if his father loves him, and is made to find out what he needs to know, or go without knowing it. The necessity of knowing is the making of men.

How is it that the children of rich men are so often imbeciles? The men that are so powerful, so mighty, are so because they were thrown upon their own resources, and had to work. They had nobody to tell them or to help them, and they had many to hinder them; and the obstacles which they met stimulated them to exertion, and they found out their way by hard knocks, more taken than given; and so they became men of might. But they are afraid of having their children subjected to those same hard knocks, and they smooth and soften the way for them. The result is that their children come up without the education which they received, and without their power.

It is a part of the divine economy, clearly indicated, that men must have the responsibility of finding out what is right, and of learning how to do it. It is the finding out, the learning, that develops them. This view is laid down in the political economy of the New Testament.

Take another point of this Sermon on the Mount, which is usually so much talked of as being simple and plain. Consider the direction which Christ gives on the subject of alms-giving:

"Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

There is nothing anywhere that countervails that. The absolute command is to give freely to those who want. If a man wants to borrow anything, let him have it; and if he forgets (as he always will) to return it, do not go for it. That is the plain, unexpounded, unmitigated precept.

Suppose, now, a man should say, "It is a thing settled, if anything is, that alms-giving is to be universally practiced, and that whatever a man wants is to be given to him?" Do our friends, the Quakers, who insist upon the literal translation of the passage on the subject of resistance, take a literal view of this passage also? Do they put their hands in their pockets for all that ask of them, and draw it out full? No. "This is to be construed," they say. "You are to take it in its spirit." Yes, I say that you are to take it in its spirit, and not in its letter. A literal interpretation of it would slay mankind, almost. It would well-nigh destroy the business life of organized society. It would break up fellowship between man and man. It would promote the very opposite of that virtue which it is the object of the New Testament to inculcate.

Suppose you were to take away from men the necessity of earning? Suppose you were to shield them from all suffering? Suppose you were to relieve them from the need of all exertion? Suppose you were to speak to the four hundred thousand people in Brooklyn, and say, "To-morrow, whoever wants money, and will go to Wall Street, may have as much as he needs for fuel, for bread, for clothes and for rent?" I should like to know how many would put up their hoes, their shovels, their various utensils, and say, "What is the use of working if we can have all that we want to make us comfortable without earning it?" Would it not produce one universal carnival of laziness? We do not need to ask whether it would or not; for there is a realm, thickly populated—the tropic realm—where there is no winter, and where the sun says, by the voice of a thousand trees, roots and spontaneous growths, to the millions there, "You do not need to work. The banana, the orange, and the cassava, says to them, "Come, we will furnish you with an abundance of food." And what sort of people are they? The whole of them put together would not make one man endowed with foresight, and frugality, and punctuality, and fidelity, and inventiveness, and all those qualities which go to make a full-grown Yankee! We have the most fruitful climate on the globe for the development of men; and with them the climate is the most unfruitful. With us it is the easiest, and with them it is the hardest, to develop robust manhood. In those climates where men do not

have to work nor ask for what they need, they are without ambition, and without a feeling of responsibility.

We have a still further exemplification of this in those countries where the Roman Catholic religion has prevailed, and where charity has been made conspicuous, and has been treated as an eminent virtue by Roman Catholic organizations. In those communities where the whole spirit of religion has run to the giving of alms, and where charity has been common, what has been the result? Self-respect has been destroyed. A universal and shameless mendicancy has been induced.

I do not say that there are no worthless men, that there are no beggars, in this Protestant country; but I say what the general observation of men will bear out, that those nations where charity and alms-giving are prevalent give us the great mass of our beggars.

We have still another example, only it exists in a different quarter. England undertook to legislate so that the poverty or dependence of her under-classes should be alleviated. Having a false system for the disposal of her capital, and for the distribution of her lands, she found that there was an immense under-class of men who could not earn their living, so that suffering came in; and she attempted to relieve them by public charity, and established her poor-laws; and what has been the effect? It has been to corrupt and debauch her laboring-classes. And to-day the foremost statesmen of England stand aghast at the fruit of the literal carrying out of the precept, "Give to him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." And not only England, but other nations in which the giving of alms has been widely practiced, and has well nigh wrought the destruction of society, are beginning to take the back track. And they must take it; for the moment you make it possible for men to get money without earning it, you strike at the welfare of mankind, by encouraging and begetting that indolence which is an insurmountable obstacle in the way of a healthful human development.

Take the spirit of this command. Do not put too much stress on the letter. Interpret the passage as enjoining the practice of generosity, of helpfulness, of kindness one toward another. Accept it as inculcating a disposition in every man to look, not on his own things, but on the things of others. That is to say, make it a principle adaptable, according to your feeling and judgment. Say, "As far as I think it to be wise, I will give; I will practice alms-giving as far as I think it will be beneficial; I will not rudely turn away those who would borrow or beg." Interpreted and accepted

thus, it will be beneficent. Use it according to your own experience and judgment, and you will make it a blessing. Employed according to the spirit, it gives life; but employed according to the letter, it kills. Interpreted as the large kindness of man to man, and as a means by which men may help each other, it is full of health and saving grace; but literalized it is full of death and damnation.

"How, then," it is asked, "shall I know when it will hurt and when it will not?" I cannot tell you. It is your business to find out. "But, I am so uncertain. If I only knew, when people came to my door." Yes, if you only knew. You must find out. "Oh, that I could be certain!" If you were certain, there would be no education. It is the discriminating, the inquiry, the taking the trouble to find out, the coming to judgment, that is teaching you and making a man of you.

If it were possible, the instruction of our Saviour on the subject of enterprise and foresight is still more striking:

"Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

Was there ever anything so absolutely plain? Was there ever anything hedged up with such illustrations? Take no thought; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Look at the birds. They take no thought; and yet they are fed. Look at the lilies. They take no thought; and yet they are clothed. If God feeds the birds, and clothes the lilies, will not he still more clothe and feed you?

The language seems unmistakable; and yet I say that if you take it literally, it will lead to demoralization, and to destruction. I should like to see if men who stand still and do nothing are clothed like lilies. I notice that they are tatterdemalions who literally attempt to live without taking thought as to how they shall be clothed. I should like to see if men would have all the food they want without taking thought. As I see them, they are eating out of swillpails and garbage carts, and are running round with baskets for scraps and fragments. Who are the men that are the best clothed and fed? Are they the

men who do not take any thought or care? It almost astounds one to think how very opposite the facts are from what the text says. If you take it literally, it kills.

But look on the other side. What are the troubles of this world? How little happiness there is among successful men who, having foresight, throw their affairs out of to-day into to-morrow! How the great golden wheel creaks as it turns round, grinding out bagful after bagful as the result of their enterprise! How little happiness do they enjoy who give themselves up entirely to worldliness and the amassing of wealth! How do they produce wealth? Is it not by rasping care and anxiety, and by all manner of craft and deception? And who does not know that these things bring unhappiness?

Suppose, then, you take the spirit of this passage, which is, that while you are working to-day you are not to worry about to-morrow; that while you are seeking your food and clothing in the present, you are not to fret about the future. It does not mean that you are to forego vigilance and exertion. How is it that the birds are fed? I have noticed that they always get up early, and hunt for their food. God has provided for them. He feeds my robins, but I see that when they are hungry they go and pick up angleworms on my lawn. God clothes my lilies; but I have to plant them, and see that they have a chance to grow and develop. And if you would be clothed and fed you must be active and industrious. He that lives according to the spirit of this passage will be wide awake, enterprising, and energetic; but he will not be a slave to his own prosperity and possessions. He will live in a large freedom. He will not allow these things to be a source of care and anxiety to him. The practice of the spirit of this precept would redeem a man from the thrall of riches. The letter kills. The spirit makes alive.

Look at one other point—the dissuasion from acquiring riches. On no other point is there more emphatic testimony.

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

You will remember that in the Beatitudes it is said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Luke says, “Blessed be ye poor.” And you will recollect that when the young man came to Christ and asked what he should do to be saved, Christ said to him, “Sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" In different places throughout the Scriptures it is taught that riches are evil and mischievous. But would civilization be helped, if all capital were dispersed? Is not civilization promoted by wealth? And are not civilized nations better off than nations that are uncivilized? Are we not better off than the Indians of our Western plains? Are not the people in Europe, where civilization prevails, more prosperous than the people in Africa, where barbarism prevails? It is by the power of wealth that great physical improvements are made. Would progress be accelerated if these improvements were not made? Would development go forward if all roads were obliterated, and there were only footpaths left? Suppose you should destroy, not only wealth, but what wealth has done, and leave the world as it would be without the power of wealth; would it be better for men? Would civilization be promoted by the destruction of railroads and mills and manufactories? Would the world be better off if all ships were sunk, and the telegraph should cease to speak over the land and across the deep? Suppose all agricultural implements and tools were taken out of the market; suppose agriculture should no longer proceed by the methods which wealth and enterprise have introduced; suppose we were transferred to the lazy life of mid-Africa, do you think we would have reason to congratulate ourselves? Do you think the destruction of wealth would improve the moral condition of the globe? Do not you think that those industries are wise which grow up under temperance, and frugality, and punctuality, and thrift, and truth, and honesty, educating men in morality, and, by serving their physical wants, giving them leisure for thought and the cultivation of taste? Suppose all architecture were destroyed, and men were compelled to live in trunks of trees, and under rocks, and in the ground; suppose all pictures, all statuary, all works of art, all books, which are the fruits of wealth, were destroyed, would it be better for the world? All the world bears the signet of gold—one of the worst masters, and one of the best servants. Although gold, if a man is supremely addicted to it, if he lives to be a *rich* man rather than a *man*, if he lives for wealth, and gives himself entirely to it, is a curse that is worse than poverty, is it not sometimes a blessing?

Now, take the true meaning of this precept. It is designed to relieve men from miseries. It is intended to keep them from an inordinate love of money. It is meant to give them a higher conception of wealth. If this construction is put upon it, in its application to the experience of every-day life, it will be a blessing to

mankind; but if men are put upon a literal fulfillment of it, it will carry the world to destruction.

The political economy of the Sermon on the Mount is absolutely impracticable if taken literally; but if taken in its spirit, it is both practical and beneficent.

I do not say anything about hating father and mother, and swearing oaths, and many other points that are included in the Sermon on the Mount, because I have not time; but I say that this sermon, which everybody praises, which most men point at as the simplest form of instruction, and which we are all the time exhorted to preach like (I have men say to me, Why don't you preach like the Sermon on the Mount? its instruction is so pure, so simple, so understandable), is the most complex and difficult of all the sermons in the Bible. You do not understand the first principles of it. You have not had the discipline nor the experience which is necessary to enable you to understand them. This shows how you have been reading the Sermon on the Mount. You have read it as boys slide downhill. You started, and you shut your eyes, and the first thing you knew you were at the other end of it! No man can take the Sermon on the Mount, and attempt to carry out its precepts in his daily life, and not find that he is in an academy which drills him on the right and on the left, and whets and sharpens him. No man can take the Sermon on the Mount and apply it to his daily life, and not be a thoughtful man, a grave man, a man of judgment, of observation, and of honest discrimination. No man can adopt the Sermon on the Mount as the rule of his life, and not feel that it is necessary for him to purify the fountain of his feelings. It touches the reason and conscience in their very center. It puts every man on the responsibility of obeying it by thought and self-tasking.

The common sense of Christian life, the general influence of the Gospel, has compelled the world to interpret the Sermon on the Mount, not literally, but according to its spirit, by the use of reason, and by the bringing to bear an intelligent moral sense upon it.

In view of these statements, then, I meet, first, the question "Is not this leaving God's counsels, God's revelation, to the interpretation of human reason? Is it not substituting human reason for the revelation of God?" Yes, if God's revelation is a substitute for reason. That is the very question. I hold that revelation is to us what salt is to meat, or what guano is to the field. It stimulates and develops that which is within us. God's revelation is not a supercession of our reason. It is not a substitute for our thought

and finding-out power. It is just so much help as to enable us to help ourselves. It is a spiritualized advocate of human reason. It takes the most positive ground in favor of the right of every man to think, to judge, and to follow his best judgment.

You are responsible for your thoughts and actions; if you make a mistake, you shall bear the consequences; but you have a moral sense, and you must keep it clear. You have affections which purify your reason, and you must dwell in the light of them. Your reason becomes skillful in discerning right and wrong, and you must exercise it.

No mistake can be more fatal than to suppose that the revelation of God's Word is one which leaves men nothing to think of, and nothing to find out.

This has been argued very nobly by Butler in his immortal treatise on Natural and Revealed Religion—a masterpiece of analogical reasoning, showing that the Bible has been constructed on the same principles on which nature itself has been constructed. As God did not make railroads, but left men to find out how to make them; as he made iron and wood, and left men to find out how to put them together; so he has left in his Word elementary principles, and left men to find out how to apply them. And there have been two great systems which have prevailed in the church, which have divided the world, and according to one or the other of which it has been attempted to settle every great moral question. Large bodies of men have attempted to work on the theory that mankind were to be provided for; and other large classes have attempted to work on the theory of Christianity, which is, substantially, that men are to provide for themselves. The one system tends to organize highly; the other tends to decentralize, and to throw upon the individual the responsibility of life. The one tends to make laws and customs and rules and ordinances on infinite points: the other tends to abolish ordinances, and customs, and rules, and laws, and to have men, by practical experience, educated in the doctrine of right and wrong, each for himself. Protestantism says that “love is the fulfilling of the law!” the Church of Rome says that obedience to certain outward forms is essential to the fulfillment of the law, and minutely prescribes those forms, so that men shall have no trouble about knowing just what to do. That Church undertakes to think for men. It says, “I am infallible, and what I lay down you are to believe.” It undertakes to arrange everything for men. It says, “This is the truth, and this is what you are to do with it.” It has books explaining all ecclesiastical questions. It arranges the details of life, so as to save men as much as

possible from responsibility. It fixes Sunday, and saints' days, and hours for the performance of each particular duty. There are matins, and noon-day services, and vesper services. There is abundant provision made for the employment of a man's whole time. He can commence at midnight, and go through all the twenty-four hours, and find something fixed for each. He is taught what to think and say and do. Under that Church men become machines. The priest takes hold of the crank and turns it, and out come the hours. They are struck regularly, as by clock-work. And a man brought up in this way has precisely as much virtue and manliness as a machine has. It cannot be helped. The result is the same, whether it be in the Roman Church, or under any other system where everything is fixed for men, so that they shall have no trouble under any circumstances, and shall be relieved from all responsibility of self-help. All those emasculating, effeminate (if we may still use that word) methods which lower responsibility, and lead men to lean on other men for guidance and support, are working toward the letter, and not toward the spirit.

Obedience is the supreme virtue under all highly organized ecclesiastical bodies that undertake to do the work for people as much as possible. That much good has been done in this way I do not deny. Men need rules before they have principles; but rules should lead to principles; and principles should lead to intuition. There are these three great stages. There has been a vast amount of good done by the Roman Catholic system; there has also been a great deal of good done by the Levitical system; but after these systems have carried men to a certain point, they cannot carry them any farther, and they become oppressive to them.

I believe it possible for a thousand men, held in subjection on a plantation at the South, to thrive for a little while; but after a time they would begin to suffer and degenerate. And those systems and observances which develop a savage and barbarous race, though they help them and bring them up to a certain point of thoughtfulness and intelligence, from that point hinder them, and tend to cramp and restrain them. When I first plant a rose-bush, a thumb-pot is large enough for it; but when I see its roots showing themselves outside of the pot, I say, "It is too small; it will bind the plant;" and I shift it to a four-inch pot. If, after a few weeks, I find that the roots are growing round and round, and becoming like a ball of twine, I shift it again to a still larger pot. And when it becomes too large for that, I say, "Out-of-doors is big enough;" and I put it in the garden, where it has all the ground it wants.

Now a church may be, in the earlier stages of human civilization, a mere receptacle ; but the ultimate aim is to bring men into a condition in which they can be turned out, and their roots allowed to find their own feeding-ground, and permitted to grow according to their own sweet will. It is the design of God that, under his economy in this world, we should be perfect men in Christ Jesus. That is the grand purpose of training institutions. And if a man does not understand it he is unfit to hold the helm ; he is unfit to be a teacher ; he is unfit to be an interpreter of divine counsels ; he misses the end and aim of the Bible, which is not to literalize men and tie them down, but, by instruction, to prepare them to stand, in their own sublime liberty, large enough to see what is right, large enough to know how to apply it, and large enough, not only to apply it to themselves, but to give help to those about them who need it, thus promoting brotherhood, and growing stronger and stronger therein.

Now, look at the different results of the two Christian systems. Out of the system of doing everything for men—thinking for them, organizing for them, arranging the economy of their religion for them—has sprung what? Monarchies? Yes. Despotism? Yes. Schools? No. Commonwealths? No. Commerce? No. Out of the system of doing everything for men has come lethargy. It has prepared the subject to be willing to be oppressed, and it has prepared the Church and the State to be willing to oppress him, and carry on oppression. And to-day, to the toiling masses of Europe religion is hateful because priest-craft and king-craft have combined together to make them suffer.

On the other hand, the Protestant system has run towards liberalism. It has run towards skepticism, also ; and so far Protestantism is dangerous. Human life is full of danger. One cannot be born into the world without risks, and cannot grow without them. If you set men free from restraint, they will run riot ; they will substitute their own selfish desires for moral sense, and will call them moral sense. There are serious mischiefs that go along with liberty, but, after all, it is a great deal safer than the want of it—a thousand times safer. Men smother without it. There is in its open air and wide horizon much that tries weakness, but its effect, on the whole, is to raise the average of self-control and manhood among men. It puts upon the individual a power and responsibility that dignifies him. It tends to produce in him a sovereignty which by and by makes him valuable as a citizen, acting for himself in his place, under the government. It is this principle of putting men upon

the duty of thinking, and of studying matters of political economy, that has made America what it is. It is that which has made Switzerland what it is. It is that which has made England and Scotland what they are. You cannot give liberty of thought and action to men without producing beneficent results. Its product has been the same wherever it has been enjoyed.

It was the liberty of reason in the Church and out of it that culminated in the Reformation, and brought on a revival of art and letters. In the Roman Church, and in all the world, the truth has been more and more demonstrated, as it will be to the end, that the spirit gives life, and the letter entails bondage.

So, as the Apostle Paul says, in the passage we have selected for our text, "We should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." This carries with it one of the most important truths which can be inculcated upon men; and in this day, when the Bible is so much in doubt, when men are so skeptical, when there is so much talk about the interpretation of Scripture, we ought to be informed as to what the Bible teaches, as to whether it supplies all the truth that any man can take in; so that all a man has to do is to accept what has been thought out for him. I say that the grand object of Scripture is to stir men up to thought; to bring their reason into activity; to make them feel the responsibility of determining for themselves what are those great lines of right and duty which are sketched and hinted at in the Word of God. With this broad, noble interpretation of the Bible, there will be no reason for casting away the Book; there will be no reason for disowning it: the Book will become more and more precious to men as they understand it better.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE thank thee, our Father, for this blessed day; for its outward brightness, and the beauty thereof; for the heavens above our heads, and for all the glory of the earth beneath our feet. We rejoice that thou hast surrounded us with so many tokens of thy munificence; with so much that teaches us what are thy thoughts, and what are thy feelings, and what are thy joys. As thou hast fashioned the earth, which is but thy footstool, grant, we pray thee, that we may have, from these things which are around about us, some help to-day; some conception of thy bounty and thy glory. Though we cannot interpret the inward life which thou art living by the life of matter, yet, may we be able, by the inspiration of thy revelation, thy power, and thy wisdom, to rise to some conception of thy greatness, and thy skill, and thy love of all things complete and beautiful. And grant that we may have brought near to us, to-day, above all other things, the sense of God in Christ Jesus; the great condescension, and patience, and gentleness of the divine nature; the brooding, tender love, the unwasting kindness, the inexhaustible forbearance of God. We pray that we may look up and see in the heaven that is above us, to-day, the brightness and the warmth which all the winter could not destroy. May we behold in these outward things thine administration. Though thou dost cast down, thou dost not destroy. Though thou dost sometimes hide the sprout, thou dost not destroy the tree. Summer and winter are symbols of thy kindness and thy care. Even severity, in the course of the years, is benefit—and bounty is no more. Whether thou art severe with us, and dost chastise us, or whether thou art lenient to us, and dost hold us up by the kindness of thy hand, thou art alike merciful. Both in pain and in joy, in darkness and in light, in adversity and in prosperity, thou art still a Father, chastening whom thou lovest, and scourging every son whom thou dost receive. And grant, we pray thee, that we may have such unfaltering trust in thee that it shall lead us to accept, uncomplainingly, that which befalls us in this mortal life. May we have a faith which shall stand us in stead of all other things, that we may live, not by sight, but by the perception of invisible things—things transcending whatever is mortal. To-day may we realize that the things which are seen are transient, but that the greater realm of things that are not seen is eternal. And may we reach forth toward these permanent verities, these unchanging substances, beyond the things which the hands can handle or the senses understand. May our hearts take hold of the reality of that treasure which is laid up for us in heaven.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to thy servants, this day, to quicken their zeal; to inspire them with renewed faith; to deepen their love; to cause their affections to flow out in their daily walk and conversation, that they may become the children of God in very deed.

We pray that thou wilt sustain any who are under trials. Wilt thou bless to them those trials, and sanctify them? We pray that thou wilt teach those who are under the rod to bow submissively to the hand that smites. It is the pierced shroud.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to those that are careworn, and give them relief and release. May they find in God a refuge from every care. And may they be able to cast their cares on Him who careth for them.

We pray for any that are in distress of bereavement; for any that are in anxiety by reason of perplexity and doubt; for any that are tried on account of their children, their companions or their friends. We pray for all, to-day, whose hearts are pained in memory of the past, or in prospect of

the future. May they draw near to thee; and may they be led to trust thee by realizing how thou art a present God in time of trouble. May they know that they have a High-priest who is touched with the feeling of their infirmity; and may they come boldly, and not be afraid to open their innermost life to God, before whom they are as an open book. We pray that thou wilt draw near to those who are placed in circumstances of great responsibility, and who feel the burden and the weight which is put upon them. May they lean upon thee, and take counsel of thee. And we pray that thou wilt more and more prepare them to go forth in that way of duty to which thou hast appointed them.

Bring joy, we beseech of thee, to every household in this congregation. Bring patience where there is trouble. Cleanse each heart from all malice, and all envying, and all jealousy. Minister thy Spirit to every one. May the dove brood in all the houses of thy servants.

We pray that thou wilt bless the labors of this people everywhere—in their secular duties, and by the way-side. May all that they attempt to do for themselves, for each other, and for the cause of mankind, be guided and blessed of God.

We pray that thou wilt grant a blessing to rest upon those who are separated from us. There are a great many that are wandering; that are upon the sea; that are in the wilderness; that are in distant lands. We commit them all to thy sovereign care, praying that thou wilt prosper them, and defend them, and restore them in due time to those that love them.

We pray that thou wilt bless the labors of thy servants in this church. May the superintendents and officers of our schools come up in remembrance before thee. We pray that they may never be weary in well-doing. May all who are taught, and all who teach, in their respective places, be blessed of God. We pray that the young may grow up in truth, and honor, and industry, and prosperity in all things that relate to their welfare in this world, and in the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We pray that thou wilt grant that this week, when so many of thy servants are going forth, the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon them. May all the schools in this great city receive thy blessing; and may all the churches, and all the societies which have been organized for the diffusion of knowledge, or for comfort and support, or for kindness and mercy, be blessed of God.

May all the efforts which are made to diffuse light and knowledge throughout our land have thy favor and thine approbation. May all schools and academics, may all colleges and universities, may all seminaries of learning of every kind, be blessed of God, and become fountains of light and knowledge, and spread all over the earth those benefits which have made us so happy. And we pray that the light of our example may lead nations, through patience, and intelligence, and piety, and true liberty, to great strength.

And so may thy kingdom come, and thy will be done, in all the earth, until the whole world shall behold thy glory.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, shall be praises evermore.
Amen.

THE SENSE OF AN EVER-PRESENT GOD.

“By faith Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king : for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”—Heb. xi. 27.

Of all the great characters that have acted in human affairs there are few more remarkable than Moses. His is among the half-dozen great names of time ; and perhaps not a single other being, purely human, has wrought so deeply and so continuously as he. He was forty years old—which surely is a ripe age—when he attempted the work of liberation for his people. Brought up amidst the blandishments of an oriental court, considered and treated as the son of the proudest monarch on earth, nothing being withheld whether for culture or for luxury, he disdained all these things. In him the sense of country, love for his people, was mightier than every other impulse. They were slaves : he was a prince. They were odious : he was full of honor. They were trodden under foot by royal authority : why should he disecrown himself, and disrobe himself, and identify himself with this stricken and despised people ? Yet this he did. He manifested himself to them as their deliverer. But they accepted him not ; they reviled him ; and every step in their path redounded to their disadvantage, and to his discredit. His life came to be in peril, and he fled from the court. So he lost at once the favor of royalty, and all its amenities, and the affection and trust of his people. He betook himself to the wilderness, and became a shepherd ; for forty years he patiently followed the pursuits of a shepherd ; and not until he had reached that age in which men ordinarily lay down their burdens, not until he was eighty years old, did he really begin his life-work. All the rest was patient waiting. *Wait and hope* seems to have been his motto.

At eighty he entered upon his task. I need not rehearse the steps by which his people were delivered from thrall. Under his

auspices they were led into the wilderness, which was made a school where he organized civil government and religious worship : where he put them for years through a training. During a period equal to the other two which divided his life, on his shoulders came the whole administration of this frivolous, enfeebled, unreasoning, headstrong and servile nation ; and he undertook the gigantic task of leading three millions of people in the wilderness till they should become inured to law and self-government, before they were planted in the promised land. And when at last the time drew near in which they were to be carried across the border, and established in Canaan, he himself was not permitted to go with them.

There is no passage in human experience more sad than that of the death of Moses. His long life had been one of unintermitted toil ; it was the joy and expectation of his whole being to establish his people in the seat of their future power : and yet, at the end of it, all that was permitted him was to stand upon the mountain and look over across the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and behold the hills of the promised land, north and south and west. He was suffered only to gaze upon a land that was to be possessed by his people, and then to fold his eagle-wings and die.

Now, this long life of patience and of enduring expectation, this long life which terminated apparently with grievous disappointment, was sustained, we are told in the Book of Hebrews, by the sense which Moses had of a God present with him, but invisible—a God realized, but not seen.

“He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”

In this great life-work which was before him, it seemed, for eighty years, that there was nothing for him to do but to tend flocks. For he had, as I have already stated, set himself loose from the court of Pharaoh, where his function, it appears, had come to an end. He patiently waited, because he had the consciousness of a present God. And when he terminated his pastoral relation to the flocks, he assumed a greater pastoral relation to this vast unorganized, discordant, and enslaved people.

His tasks then became mighty. None know what the cares of a people are who have felt none of these responsibilities. During that administration he issued laws so wise that they have mingled themselves with the laws of every nation on the globe—laws so wise that they had in them germs of natural justice and civil polity which have come down to our day, and which are strong in our commonwealth. And while he was fashioning all these elements, that which maintained him was the silent consciousness, *Thou, Lord God, art with me.*

That same power has not lost its effect. It has been felt in all the ages which have passed since that time. Other men, though their characters may not have been so sublime as his, or so fruitful, have, in their various spheres, and according to the nature of their lives, been enabled to achieve great victories, and to endure great pressure, by the power of the same inspiration. They have "endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

In our day, when the force of observation is so strong, and when the senses have mounted into the judgment seat, and are pronouncing to so great a degree the judgments of truth, the question still more frequently addresses itself to the minds of those who reflect on the subject of God, "Why, if we are to be under the influence of the Divine nature, is there no manifestation of God? Why should God be invisible? Why should there not be, at any rate once in an age, or in a man's lifetime, an exhibition of him? Since it is a matter of such supreme importance that men should believe in God, and feel his presence and power, why is he not disclosed to them? Why should the race have been created incompetent to discern God by the same methods by which they discern other things? We are created to discern facts; we are created with all the faculties necessary to enable us to discern the truths of God's existence, of his royalty, and of his government; and why is there no adaptation in the human mind by which we can see God?" The question is one of subtle difficulties, and it will not stay answered. It drops again and again into doubt. Men are continually asking, "Why is there not a more manifest revelation of God?"

Over against this, without going into a critical or philosophical answer, stands the fact, that from the beginning of the world the human race has had no visible God; and that, from the beginning of the race, the noblest natures among men have "lived as seeing [as if they saw] him who is invisible." In other words, an invisible God has wrought in such a way upon the human mind, that while the great mass of mankind have believed in him, in a sense, the strongest, the deepest, the most luminous natures have been the most intensely directed to the invisible God—or, if I may so say, the conceptional Deity—the Deity that is framed by their thought, and their imagination, and their faith. The most heroic endurances and achievements in this world have been inspired in great moral natures by the realization of an invisible God.

While, then, if you look at it personally and philosophically, it would seem to be something extraordinary that a Being so needful to the very purpose of human life should be so obscure that no man can say, "I have seen him," or, "I have heard him speak," the

necessity of a Divine manifestation is not so great, since in every age of the world the best men, they that have done the best things, are those that have made such a use of an undisclosed God as to rise from the ordinary level of life into heroic moods and to heroic achievements. The faith of an invisible God has done the hardest thing that can be done with the human race ; and that is, to hold it steadfast, year after year, to the high purposes of moral development on one side and self-abnegation on the other, causing it to live by faith and hope, and to unfold steadily a higher character and condition.

If you still press the question, Why should not God accommodate himself to human necessities ? why should there not be, at least occasionally, a direct disclosure of him, so that all could see him ?—it can be answered only suggestively. No adequate answer can be given to it but this : that the human race are on their way up from the lower and germinal point to a point at which they shall meet God, as it were, on his own level.

Then there is the same difficulty in the revelation of a personal God by sight and by sense to men who learn by sight and by sense, that there is in making known to a child the reality of the being of one who is grown up. A child knows *father* and *mother* ; a child has a vague sense that father and mother are good and kind ; it discriminates one from the other : but a child's knowledge of its father and mother stops infinitely short of that which they think of when they speak of their own being. A child can neither understand your thoughts, nor the delicacy and sweetness and endless flow of your affections, nor your ambitions and aspirations. It is entirely ignorant of that which carves you out inwardly as a civilized, Christian being. That which it can understand is the case, as it were, the outward development, the physical nature that belongs to you ; whereas that which is your reality, your inward self, he cannot understand. There is no power in you to explain it to him, because there is no power in him to perceive it. There is no understanding element in him.

He that makes motions in the air makes no music unless his hands touch the keys of an instrument ; and so he that thrusts thoughts of God where there is no faculty of perception does not interpret him. The light shines into darkness, and the darkness comprehends it not. There is not in an undeveloped child's mind that which, when a thought is presented to it, perceives it. It is inherently impossible that there should be perception where the qualities on which it depends are wanting.

There is the Pantheistic scheme, which is only an outward dis

closure, a physical representation of God. It does not touch the interior. The true interior God cannot be interpreted to the senses. It cannot be brought down to their level. It could not be understood by us, even if it were placed before us—and it *is* placed before us. God walks before us all the time; and yet we see him not. He dwells in our midst; doubtless he is making himself manifest to the spiritual beings that swarm throughout the universe, and is right in our presence; and why do we not discern him? Because he is a spirit, and must be spiritually discerned if discerned at all; and we are carnal, and can understand only the lower forms of knowledge. We are working our way up from sense to sensibility; we are steadily progressing toward an intuitional state; we have in ourselves intimations of disclosive power; and by and by we shall discern these spiritual realities: but the very lowness of our condition, our nascent, half-organized, undeveloped estate, makes it impossible for us to comprehend such things now. I say the idea of a disclosure of God personally to us as a visible form, contradicts the laws of divine existence. If anything is so reduced that we can perceive it with the eye and measure it by the senses, it has ceased to be ineffable spirit, which God is; it has lost that which inheres in the original, and makes the original what it is.

If, then, you ask, “Why is there not a clear and unmistakable disclosure of God to men?” the answer is this: No man can be helped to a comprehension of God except by developing himself, and carrying himself up into those altitudes where he shall at last have discernment, not so much through sensuous reasoning as by moral intuitions. When a man has reached those altitudes, with or without his reason, there will be borne into him the consciousness, “Thou, Lord-God, art.”

The importance of having this sense of an ever-present God will occupy our thought for the residue of this discourse.

As a matter of philosophic speculation, as a matter pertinent to the formation of religious states, a discussion of the reasons why God is not visible, why he hides himself in his grand invisibility, is not without its uses; but the main benefit of a consideration of this subject should be derived from pressing upon you the necessity, more than ever now, of maintaining a consciousness—not a comprehension of God, or invisible Spirit—a consciousness that there is an intelligent God who knows all our fears; by whom we are read as an open book; before whom we are naked; from whom there can be nothing hidden; who sees through all disguises; who knows the truth afar off, absolutely as well as relatively. We dwell in the presence of such a Being, who fills the spheres; who is the Father

of providence; who is the source and fountain of all government; from whose will flows down all the long tide of future bliss; who comprehends all things; in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

In the first place, it is extremely important, at the present time, in these days of philosophical investigation and of natural science, not to stop the thoughts of men upon physical or second causes. It is transcendently important that men should go beyond those causes, and, if they have not a physical conception of God, still have a practical feeling that high above nature is the Creator; and that, though they may not be able to limn his portrait, nor give proportion to all his attributes, they may yet believe that he is a God of righteousness, and truth, and justice, and will, and power, and infinite wisdom, and ever-presence, and control, and love; so that the whole scheme of the world and of the universe works toward the eradication of evil and the triumph of good.

There may have been—there was, undoubtedly, in early days—a disproportion the other way. Men did not enough consider second causes, or those great laws which are being disclosed now, and which are becoming so potential among men. There was a time when everything was supposed to proceed immediately from the will of God. According to the notions which prevailed then, grass grew because, as it were, his will pried up every particular stem. Every drop of water out of heaven came down because he threw it. To the imagination of the Hebrew, every blast of lightning was the flash of his eye, and every bolt of thunder was the sound of his voice. There was a general impression that whatever was done by law, as we now say, was done by the immediate volition of God.

We have gone step by step onward until now we see that God governs by natural law. I will not say that he never governs by the direct impulse of his own will; but the great government of affairs in this world is by natural law. And we are leaning to the other extreme. And though we are not in terms dispossessing God of any place in his own universe, yet we are substantially taking the ground that whatever is done is done by the force of natural laws, as if natural laws were themselves a reticulated, universal Godhead; as though physical force were all the force there is, or all that is comprehensible.

It becomes desirable, therefore, that men—and none so much as those who believe in the evolutions of science and higher knowledge—should recognize that above, and behind, and beyond all the laws which we can trace, is a universal Being whose nature is so vast, and whose realm is so subtle, that he is beyond the interpretation of

the senses, and that we cannot rise to behold him or measure him by any of those tests by which we behold and measure lower and less truths.

We need, also, looking upon the long course of time, upon the procession of events which have transpired, upon that which we call *the historic movements of the race*, and which devout men call *the providential history of the government of God in the world*, to maintain continuously, high above all tampering of doubt, the fact that God has been in the affairs of this world, and not simply human volition. Men have not been mere wheels in a machine ; they have been full of power, and by their compliance or non-compliance they have had, and will have, much to do with the determination of events. But there is one thing that we should insist upon—namely, that while natural law has had its part, and while human volition has had its part, in the scheme by which the affairs of this world are governed, above all other influences there has been a guiding Thought and a guiding Power.

If I look upon a power-loom, and see the hundred threads that stand upon their quill wheels, carrying the separate colors which enter into the fabric coming out on the other side, I say, perhaps, "That carpet, of such a beautiful pattern, with scores of colors, and all conceivable figures, is the result of the action of natural laws. It was from the alembic that you got your colors, and it was from the sheep that you got your wool. That is the secret of the fabric. It is all easy of interpretation." "But the machinery," you say. "O yes," I say ; "that machinery is a natural product. The iron is from nature. The formation of the wheels is a reproduction of certain things that are in nature. They have been put together so that by force and gravitation they work out given results. You have your material factors and your causation ; and the combined operation of these is all that there is in this power-loom which is constantly weaving and unrolling carpets of such beautiful patterns."

Now, who ever stumbled over a power-loom that grew ? Who ever found a sheep that spun its own wool ? There was one intelligence that sheared the sheep ; there was another intelligence that spun the thread ; there were other intelligences that studied and invented the dye ; there were other intelligences that put the thread into the vat, and stained it through and through with color ; and there were other intelligences that wove the fabric. There were multitudes of intelligences, running through ages, that perfected the weaving art. This extraordinary power-loom stands as the result of long-continued investigation. There are five hundred sep-

arate lines of thought, the ripening of which has required hundreds and thousands of years ; and at last they all come together, and produce that fabric, under the direction of the master of the factory. The pattern was in his head before it went down on those pasteboards ; and every one of them has relation to what the machine shall do. As you stand and look at the power-loom, it seems almost as though you might carry on a conversation with it.

I stood in Lowell and saw the power-loom work, and I said, "This thing ought to vote !" There were about it so many indications of intelligence, so many evidences of high and living thought, that I felt almost rebuked. I could not follow all its motions—or motives, if I may so say. I marveled that it should know how to put every thread into its proper place, and every color in its right spot, and every figure so that it should come out right. But all this intelligence came from two quiet, thinking men—the pattern-maker and the manager—who were back in the office, and not seen. Out comes the carpet steadily, day and night, and all through the year, and it is thrown into the market. And think of a man's standing by, and saying, "I see the reason of these things. Here is their origin. Talk to me about their being the result of creative intelligence ! They are the result of creative machinery."

So men look on all the course of nature, and its ten thousand influences. They trace this up to one natural law, and that up to another natural law, through ages. Climatic forces—light, heat, moisture—marine or mountain influences, have had their effect on men. And men have been giving forth a little here and a little there of their own motive power. As a result, out has come the great fabric of history, unfolding and flowing down to us. And we look back and say, "If it had not been for Alexander, that would not have been ; if it had not been for Cæsar, that would not have had an existence. It was such a thinker that did this, and it was such a thinker that did that." Men trace the products of the world's history to primary causes ; and they say, "What is the need of a God ?" They say, "We see where these things come from : they come gradually from human thought and development." Multitudes of men fall upon the theory that the universal race is God. In other words, *God*, to them, is only a name that sets forth the substance of universal thought and universal finding-out.

Now, you might just as well say, because you do not see the pattern-maker and the manager of the power-loom, that all it does it does by its own nature, and that there is no guiding intelligence behind it, as to look upon that greater mystery, with myriads of factors and innumerable colors, and see that from the earliest historic

period it has held steadily one great upward course, amidst crimes, and vast brutal outbreaks, and interruptions, and say that there has not been an underlying thought or plan. Men and things have not made themselves, or marked out their course. While they have been evolving a nature of their own, it has been in subordination to some far-off power; and that we call God.

As we are in danger of losing our God by an over-addiction to natural law, or to causation, so we are in danger of losing him by prevailing systems of social life, and by great civic courses in the affairs of men. And that which is true in respect to people at large is also true in respect to our own personal selves. The consciousness of purity, the feeling of pride, the development of a victorious feeling, and of a cultivated understanding—all these tend toward unconscious atheism. There is many and many a man who is a blank atheist, though he holds formally to the existence of a God. He feels sufficient for himself. He is surrounded by those circumstances and conditions which are required for his prosperity; and although he technically and orthodoxly believes that there is a God, he does not see any use for one. He does not perceive that he touches *him* anywhere. He does not feel the need of him.

Every man, however, needs the sense of a present God; because there is no man that lives who does not need to be drilled, disciplined, and broken into something higher and nobler and better than he is by nature. It is necessary as an inspiration to those who are endowed slenderly, and as a restraint to those who are endowed largely. Every one is apt to feel that he is well endowed; for every man has such self-confidence, such an intense sense of selfness and resolute power, that almost nobody feels, or is willing to feel, that he needs just that discipline which we give to flax or hemp. These, in their natural state, are unfit for use. Who could take flax in the stalk and make a garment of it? It has much in it that is good, and more that is useless; and it is not until it has been dew-rotted, and has gone through the brake, and all the woody matter has been hateheled out of it, not until it is bleached and combed and carded, and made into thread, that it can be used for making a garment. It is its last state that makes it useful; and not its natural state. Almost every one of our faculties needs to go through a period of growing and a period of discipline, so that it shall be broken in. Many to a great extent discordant aptitudes should be so wrought together by some supreme overruling power, that the whole human mind should work together and in right lines. For man, rightly described, is an angel riding on a monkey and a bear. We have both the foolish, fantastic elements which are represented

by the monkey ; we also have that hard, gross, brutal nature, which is represented by the bear ; and, superincumbent on these are aspirations and inspirations—angelic tendencies. And how shall all these elements be associated together ? how shall they be so recombined that the whole power of man shall work towards the angelic, the lower impulses giving tone and power to the higher and nobler ?

It is by this grand discipline of life, it is by the infinite snubbings of experience, that men have their pride brought down to its proper proportion and proper place. Pride, like red in a picture, would be glad to flare out in great preponderance over everything else ; and it is the necessity of every man among men to be beat back and beat down, in order to make his pride keep its subordinate place. Men are, like animals, greedy, selfish ; and they need to be taught, as they are by ten thousand providences, that they must look upon the things of others as well as upon their own things. They need to be taught, in other words, beneficence. The whole nature of man needs to be wrought over again and wrought together. It needs, by discipline and trial, to be made to work toward high intellectual and moral ends.

For this, where is there anything of equal potency with the recognition and consciousness, “Thou, God, seest me” ? The father helps ; the mother helps ; the neighbor, the school, the farm, the ship, public sentiment, civic economy,—all things are helping—but so far as the individual man becomes co-operative and inspired with a sense of the true direction of things it must come from a consciousness of the presence, the reality, and the glory of an overhanging invisible Power.

In the discouragements of life, too, we need a consciousness of the presence of God. We go out in the morning princes, and we sneak back home again at night slaves. We go out feeling, “What is there that I cannot do ?” and we come back feeling, “What is there that I can do ?” We go out swelling and tumultuous with a sense of our thought-power, of our organizing power ; and we come back feeling that all we have done has been to mix clay and mud, and that the first footfall has destroyed everything that we built up. There is this constant collision between a man’s over-estimating himself in buoyant moods, and his under-estimating himself in gloomy moods. There is this everlasting difference all the way through life, between the ideal and the real ; between the conceptional and the practical ; between the sowing and the reaping. There is this perpetual discrepancy between that which men see, and that which they get and do. And where can a man find,

under such circumstances, support and patience in the acquiescence with dull necessity, except in the faith, "God is causing all things to work together for good to them that love him. God is dealing with me, and I feel his inspiration. In the midst of my endeavors I feel my own weakness ; but though I am apparently beaten down, abandoned, forsaken, still there is in the nature of God strength and restoration—so that all things, after all, shall work together for good to me." In the thousand despondencies of life, in its over-matched conflicts, in its defeats, in its reactionary periods, in its nights of gloom, in all those experiences which come with infirm and conscious sinfulness, there rises up—or may rise up—before every soul, a sense of an over-ruling Providence, an ever-guiding Influence, that shall make up in man for all his deficiencies and mistakes.

We need it, likewise, as a grand counterpoise to the influence of men with their fellow-men. Although the influence of man with man is designed to be, and is, in the main, a moral benefit, yet what weakness and restraint come from its perversion ! The interest which we feel in men ; the bias which is produced by sympathy and affection on the one side, and the influence which is produced by the consciousness of men's superiority and power over us on the other side ; the looking up and out, sidewise and down, toward our fellow-men,—these are things from which come temptations in human life.

We need, therefore, a great balance-wheel. We need a central influence that is higher and nobler than men, and that comes nearer to us than men do.

Who is there of us that does not have occasion every year, every month, every week of his life, to say, "I thank God that there is a better understanding in heaven than here" ? How many men do wrong, and are praised as if they were right-doers, and are ashamed, and feel humbled in themselves, at the consciousness of men's misjudgments ! How many more men attempt to do right, and suffer in the attempt through the misconstruction of their motives, and appeal in their silent thoughts from the great unknowing world to the great knowing God !

While we are not to set ourselves apart from men, while we are to take our lot, and dwell in sympathy with our fellows, we need something that is higher than mankind—a counsellor—a present help—an all-seeing God—that shall make us able to stand whatever may be the currents that flow around about us ; to be independent in our judgments ; to be continuous in principle and purpose, though men deride ; to abide by that which in our sight and conscience before God is right and proper. Men need to be held stead-

fast under all the influences that beat in upon them from their social connections. And this is the effect of the sense of an ever-present God.

Then everybody needs to have his ideal life kept bright. We are not apt to run to ideals. Youth is generous and ardent toward right ; but not far along in life men find the switch turned ; and whereas they meant to do all things right, they find themselves running with immense power in the direction of selfishness ; and by and by, after some rebuffs and troubles, they say, " I suppose it must be so ; one must not expect too much "—and then give up.

Other men find themselves running along the line of ambition ; and though at first they reluctate, and make some feeble resistance, at length they say, " I cannot get out of it ; I must take things as they are ; in Rome I must be as a Roman "—and then submit to temptation.

Other men take a certain line which they suppose to be right, and meet disaster, and are discomfited, and say, " This comes of attempting to follow an ideal. If I had taken things as I found them, without attempting to make a pattern of myself, and had followed the paths that custom had marked out, I should have got along well enough."

There is a constant temptation brought to bear upon men to lower their ideal of life, and to say, " Large manhood you cannot have. You can only do so much in this world. That you had better do, and let the rest alone."

We need, therefore, to have always before our minds the thought of One who is pure, and true and just ; of One who suffers that others may not suffer ; of One who gives up everything that others may have everything ; of One who empties himself of glory and delight in order that men may be filled with delight and glorious victory by and by. We need that there should be shining down upon us something more heroic than heroes, something more noble than the noblest men. We need the shining upon us of an invisible God, who shall hold us up to our ideals.

Lastly, in our hours of solitude and weakness and decay, and especially in the last footsteps which we print upon the soil, when we go down into the valley and shadow of death, we need that there shall rise up above us and beyond us that which shall lead us to say, " I fear no evil. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

My friends, we shall go hence, every one of us. Whatever uncertainties there may be, there is no uncertainty in this : that youth is running toward age, and age toward old age ; and that old age, full of weakness and infirmity, will be overtaken by the swinging of

the scythe. Though mid-life may escape, the course of life is toward weakness. Immortality does not live here. All strength and power in men is at last overcome. Whatever may be your condition, and whatever may be your wish, one thing is certain : that there draws near to you the time when you must fold the wing, and lay down the strong truncheon, and yield up the spirit. And in that hour when the more we are loved the more helpless is love ; in that hour when the richer we are the less able are riches to do anything ; in that hour when the more there is about us the less is it flavorsome and desirable ; in that hour when heart and flesh fail—we need the comfort of believing, with all our heart and mind and soul, that universal intelligence and universal love preside ; that we are leaning on the arm of a God who is never weary ; that we are guided by an Eye that never sleeps ; that we are safe, and saved by a Heart that never ceases to beat with sympathy and love.

Through all the struggles of life, then, here is this resort ; here is this medicine ; here is your food ; here is your light ; here is your aspiration ; here is that which shall sustain you while living, comfort you while dying, and bless you with immortality in the life that is to come !

So may it be said of every one of us, when we have passed and gone :

“ He endured, as seeing him who is invisible.”

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We rejoice in thy goodness. We rejoice in that glory which we have beheld reflected in nature, and in the manifestation which thou hast in Jesus Christ our Lord, and all the knowledge of thee which we have had revealed through the experience of thy people from age to age. Thou art a God that loveth righteousness. Thou dost not desire that thy creatures shall be remote, and feeble, and as the beasts of the earth. Thou art bringing them up by all thy providences, and by all the laws of thine administration, that they may be worthily called sons of God. We are growing toward the height of this honor. We are inspired by thee with sentiments that break forth more and more toward truth, and integrity, and love, and purity, and fidelity, and reverence, and godliness in fear and in love; and we thank thee for this ministration of thy Spirit. In the great invisible realm of things where thou dwellest, thou art sending down upon all men the divine influence. Thou art quickening that which is good, and restraining that which is evil; and we thank thee for thy providential administration, and for those grand ends therein which thou hast revealed, and for all the hope which we have for future days. Not by our wisdom, not by our pride, not by our skill, has the world been guided in its upward development and growth. Thou art drawing out by thy mind and by thy will, and art refashioning the forms of men, and giving better, and higher, and nobler developments to mankind. We rejoice to believe that there is to be a day, by-and-by, when men shall be regenerated, and when the race shall stand with unexampled purity, and beauty, and happiness, and when there shall be a new heaven and a new earth in which shall dwell righteousness. Although now we are far from it, though we are as men who walk at midnight, the night is far spent, and the day is at hand, and the space from midnight toward morning is filled with signs and tokens of growing promise; and we rejoice to believe that the day-star shall dawn, and that when it passes it shall be by the radiance of the brighter sun which shall lead on the golden hours. And yet, there shall be all round the world no requiem, no sigh, no groan, no travelling in pain and anguish; but joy shall spring up and meet joy, and the choral song shall be of praise to Him that has loved and redeemed the world. For that consummation which we desire with unutterable longings, we would give life and strength, and all that we have. And we beseech of thee that every one of us may make an offering, first, of his own soul. May we dwell nearer to thee, and be endued with thy Spirit, and partake of something of God in Christ Jesus, and learn the royal lesson of suffering, of self-renunciation, of trust, of hope, of purifying love, and of fidelity to God. And we pray that thy kingdom may be in us and in others, until one and another, and multitudes uniting together, shall begin this blessed result.

We pray for thy blessing to rest, to-night, upon those that speak and those that hear; upon all that have part in the ministry of song, of instruction, and of fellowship. And wilt thou comfort any that are cast down? Wilt thou strengthen any that are weak? Wilt thou confirm any that are wavering? Send light, we beseech of thee, to any that are in doubt. We pray that thou wilt grant strength to every one, so that as his day is his strength may be also. We pray that thou wilt grant that those who are discouraged—those who have been striving to walk in the right way, but who seem to themselves to be overborne by circumstances on the right and on the left, may look up to God, who is mightier than all other things. And if they cannot live in their own strength, may they learn to live in the strength of Almighty God.

And we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon those who

thine—who do not recognize thy law, thy service, nor thy Spirit. Turn them away from their darkness. Turn them back from their disobedience. Turn them with hearty repentance for sin, with reformation of life, with holy consecration, and with beginning affection toward God, that they may have the blessedness of his presence, and that they may inherit the promises. Are there not many who have aforetime walked in the ways of faith, and have forgotten them and gone aside? Wilt thou not touch their souls, and awaken again those feelings which have long been slumbering or are extinct?

We beseech of thee that thou wilt revive thy work in this church and in the churches about us, and make thy Word more and more powerful in the slaying of enmity, and in the building up of true Christian life.

Let thy kingdom come in all the nations of the earth. Send abroad the light and power of the Gospel everywhere. May those that preach feel that the Lord is with them. May they be endued with patience and wisdom. And accept, at last, the fruit of their labor.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer for thy great mercy's sake. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Grant thy blessing, our Father, to rest upon the word that has been spoken. Kindle in every heart a desire to know thee, not by the outward eye, nor by the physical sense, but by inward inspiration. Shine into every heart. Manifest thyself to us as thou dost not to the world. We ask not that there should be a voice; we ask not for a form; we ask not for any such communication between thee and ourselves as there is between man and man. But as we know the summer, high in the air, or deep in the earth, by all the things that it produces, and are able to say, "Behold the summer is with us!" so may there be that in our universal sense which shall show that the air and the courses thereof, and time, and all its outlets and inlets, are filled with the Divine presence. May we rejoice in thee, knowing that we do not half understand thee; knowing that we only approach the verge and edge of thy being; knowing that our experience in life, of truth, and patience, and disinterestedness, are adulterated and fragmentary, as particles of gold which the stream bears down; knowing that we have but an outermost and remote conception of that great Orb of being whom we shall yet see, when we are raised to spiritual existence. May we rejoice; for though we know so little, may we have confidence to believe that that which is true is immeasurably more true than the heart of men can conceive. More glorious art thou in holiness than we can understand. We do not know what is the meaning of the word in its amplitude, and beauty, and majesty, when we call thee holy. We do not know what is the length, and breadth, and height, and depth, and wonder-working power of that love which carries summer through the heavens perpetually; of that love which moves with mighty force through the inchoate creation; of that love which is giving breath to infinite existences, running through the eternities, waiting and nourishing all things; of that love which we see waking in feeble bosoms; of that love which, like a mighty atmosphere, moves through the universal realm, and by which all things, at last, shall be

fashioned to the honor and glory of God, and to the welfare of his creatures. Though we yet stand afar off and gaze, blessed be thy name that our imperfect knowledge works gladness, because we are comforted in that which we can grasp and comprehend. It is more and better—unspeakably better—than the heart of man hath ever conceived. More glorious is it than we can comprehend.

And now, we beseech of thee that thou wilt abide with us. While we struggle upward, wilt thou meet us? Thou dost. No water can rise, winged, in the air, and move invisible, or bank itself in clouds, but by the help of the sun shining on it; and so wilt thou give us thine aid, and lift us into ethereal thought and power. And when thou hast served thyself by us, and shaped us, and developed us, so that we shall be fit for transplanting, bring us into that better soil, that higher realm, those nobler conditions, where we shall go forth and know as we are known, and see thee as thou art, and be satisfied with thy likeness.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. *Amen.*

THE NATURE AND SOURCES OF TEMPTATION.

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”—James i. 13, 14.

It is very seldom that the sacred writers make philosophical analyses. It is seldom that they deal in psychological questions. Ordinarily they state things as they appear to common people, and as they are described in the language of common life. Now and then, however, there is a statement of remarkable breadth and accuracy, even in a philosophical point of view. For example, no better definition of *faith* has been given than that which is given by the writer of the Hebrews :

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

In the text, temptation is very subtly discriminated, and wrong conceptions are thrown out. It is not very often, in our time, that men think they are tempted of God ; but in the ancient days the gods were supposed to incline men to evil, in order that they might snare and punish them. There was an impression that men were tempted of God directly ; and the apostle James declares that in this sense—that of tempting to evil—God neither is tempted himself, nor tempts any one. Men are far more likely, in our times, to allege that their temptations are irresistible, and spring from the devil—not from God.

But having uttered caution and given instruction on the other side of the origin of temptation as divine, the apostle declares that every man is tempted, if at all, “when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.” Temptations, for the most part, spring from a man’s passions. Men’s emotions or feelings furnish the impulse or desire upon which temptation plays. A pulseless man, a soulless man, a man without desires, could scarcely be tempted.

There are what may be called, perhaps, intellectual desires or tastes ; but for the most part they are feeble, comparatively colorless. The great bulk of human life springs from the appetites and the passions, from the desires and the affections ; and to these the appeal is made, whether for good or for bad. We persuade men, and we dissuade men, upon the appropriate use of these great motives and elements that are in them.

What, then, is *temptation*, in its simplest idea ? It is the presenting of inducements to men to act right or wrong. The language, " We tempt to right," has gone out of use. We *persuade* to right ; we *tempt* to evil.

When, then, inducements are presented to men to evil courses—to evil thoughts, to evil feelings, and to evil acts—there is simply the presentation of motives to them ; there is persuasion ; there is never coercion. Men are never tempted by superior powers in such a way that they cannot resist. They are enticed and weakened by a presence exterior to themselves, and they are swept away by it. Men are tempted in their own desires, passions, appetites, lusts, as they are called. Men are tempted when they are drawn away of their own selves, in the form of strong desire, appetite, passion or lust. So that temptation, to all intents and purposes, is self-inflicted or self-entertained. Its strength, its power, its center, lies in the man's own self. What he is, will determine how he will be tempted. How strong he is in the temptable points, will determine very largely the strength of the temptation itself.

The force of temptation will depend, not altogether on the strength of the desire, the appetite, or the passion which the man has in himself ; it will depend, also, in part, upon the quality and adaptation of the motive or persuasion. Consider each of these.

It is not possible to tempt any person except through some desire in that person. If there were no desires in men, how could you reach them ? In what way could you persuade them ? When we attempt to persuade men in a bargain, in social affairs, in civic or political matters, in pleasure, in the ten thousand combinations of life in which men live ; when it is our desire to draw them this way or that way, how invariably do we touch this or that spring ! We instinctively know what are the motives to present to men, and what are the motives on which they act most readily. Some men are thoughtful, sober, conscientious, cold ; and we should never think of reaching them through love and sympathy and geniality. In attempting to address them, we should approach them through some of the steady, sober faculties, knowing the avenues through which they are accessible ; knowing what are the great fundamental

instincts in them which will respond to our touch. We attempt to influence every person by the known nature of that person.

Right over against these are persons who are genial, sympathetic and kind; and we know that we should touch them through kindness and sympathy and geniality. Humor and mirth is the avenue through which to reach the confidence and receptivity of some persons; and so we approach them according to the way in which we know their mind acts. If a man be accessible through praise, we touch his love of praise when we attempt to influence him. If a man be very proud, we approach him in such a way that his self-respect will be gratified, so that he will be at peace with himself, and therefore at peace with us. We approach every man according to the appetite or passion or quality through which he is most accessible, if we would persuade men.

Under such circumstances, men study each other, in order to touch the appetites, the passions, the desires, the living forces which are in them, just as a musician touches the keys of the instrument before him, knowing that in touching each key he strikes the chord which lies back of it. We play upon each other insensibly. It is a matter almost of unconsciousness; but every man who has been in the world, and knows much about it, has become familiar with the fact that men are constantly influencing and managing each other more or less by appealing to some feeling or emotion.

If we do this wisely, and for each other's benefit, as well as for our own pleasure, there is no harm in it; but if we do it selfishly, it is sinful. One of the great sins of this life is the playing upon the feelings of our fellow-men for selfish purposes.

Now, if the desire in men is strong and active, temptation fastens upon it all the easier. Whether that temptation spring from visible or invisible sources; whether it be from human or demoniac influences, it is substantially the same in tendency; and the strength of it lies, primarily, in the strength of the feeling to which you address it.

For instance, a man who is constitutionally without large self-esteem—and there are a great many such—will never be tempted through pride. He has not the string to touch; or, if he has, it responds so feebly that it is hardly worth while to touch it.

No man will ever be tempted to vanity who has not large approbateness. If, however, a man have large approbateness, he certainly will be tempted in the direction of vanity. There are ten thousand influences streaming in upon him from every side; and if he have an appetite in him which hungers for praise, or for appreciation, you may be sure that he will be tried, and that that feeling in him

will be approached. And the force of the persuasion to which a man is subjected is in the ratio of the strength of the passion or the desire which is appealed to.

No man will be tempted to cowardice unless he is beforehand cautious and timid. A man who is without fear is never tempted to cowardice. Where a man is addicted to fear, he will, if a given kind of circumstance arise, be tempted to cowardliness of thought and feeling, and cowardliness of action.

A man that is generous and benevolent, and does not greatly desire property, is never tempted to avarice, because the feeling through which avarice is brought to bear is wanting. If, on the other hand, men have a strong desire for property ; if they love it, not for what it can do, but for the sake of the thing itself ; if the instinct of property be strong in them, then they are with great facility tempted to avarice.

A man who is constitutionally mild and gentle is very seldom tempted to anger or to cruelty. It is almost impossible to bring him up to the necessary degree of injured feeling, even when aggravating circumstances exist. But if a man be by nature quick to feel resentment, if he be largely endowed with combativeness and destructiveness, he will certainly be tempted along the line of these strong feelings.

So, then, the strength of your temptation lies in the strength of the inherent desires and appetites which you have. When you are tempted, it is you that tempt yourself. The enticement comes from without, but the power is generated in you ; it belongs to you ; it is a part of you. Under all circumstances it is normal and natural. Temptation is to be removed from the sphere of mysticism. It is to be taken out of the realm of sorcery.

If a man is tempted to lie, it is because conscience is small in him. It is because that passion for the gratification of which he lies, is large. If men tempt each other, they know each other ; and they touch that which is temptable, that which is easy to reach, in each other.

No man, then, would tempt a benevolent man, or a merciful man, except through his benevolence, or his mercifulness. No man would ever tempt an over-sympathetic man except through his sympathetic nature. Men sin from temptation on the side of undue sympathy and kindness and leniency ; and they sin in the opposite direction in precisely the same way.

The grand response to temptation, therefore, is normal, natural, constitutional. It is the response of your nature to the motive that is addressed to you.

It is very true that there is an additional and secondary element constituting the strength of temptation—namely, the motive itself. I have said that the prime qualification attaching to the strength of temptation is the strength of the desire to which it is applied ; but the amount of motive which you apply to that desire or passion also enters into the composition, and is to be considered.

If, for instance, a man be tempted with money, the desire is strong, and the temptation may be supposed to be strong ; but if the sum by which he is tempted be small, the temptation will be comparatively feeble. It will be like a child's finger on an organ-key, which the child cannot push down hard enough to make a great deal of sound. But if there be large temptation ; for instance, if an avaricious man have the prospect of great gains, the magnitude of the gains, and the continuity of them, fire, to an intense sensibility, the passion, the desire for gain. So that the accumulation of motives, it is said, determines, in part, the strength of the temptation ; and the feeling upon which they play also determines in part the strength of the temptation, in any case. This is true of a whole range of faculties.

When, therefore, men are thrown into exigencies in life, where the pressure of motive is very strong, it is true that there are elements outside of them which have much to do with the probabilities of their fall or their resistance.

If you were to put a blind man into a gallery of pictures, there would not be the slightest danger that he would ever be tempted by those pictures. He might live there a month or a year, and he would not covet them. But put an artist there ; and if there is a single picture that he admires, and he sees how by practicing some chicanery, or by taking some advantage, he can become the possessor of that picture at far less than its real value, he is tempted somewhat. But if there are two, or three, or four pictures, by some celebrated modern artist, the temptation is much greater ; and if they are by some *old* master, it is even greater still. The degree of the temptation is according to the desirableness of the exterior objects which are presented to the eye, according to the outward inducement, as well as according to the strength of the excitable feeling in the artist.

In Cincinnati, not a great while ago, a candidate for the Christian ministry was arrested for stealing books out of the public library. They were found at his home. He took them on principle. It was necessary that he should preach the Gospel ; he could not preach unless he could study ; he could not study because he

had not the means to buy books ; and so he stole them ! He wanted to serve the Lord and his fellow-men as a preacher ; he could not do this without knowledge ; he could not obtain the requisite knowledge without books ; so, going into the library and seeing a goodly array of books (for one of the noblest libraries in the United States is the public library in Cincinnati), he was tempted to steal some of them ; and he took them as he wanted them, and carried them home. And oh ! how easy a book can be stolen ! I never stole one ; but I have had a great many stolen from me.

Now, exterior conditions have a great deal to do with this act. Those books would have been no temptation to that man if he had not been of an intellectual or literary turn of mind. An ignorant, unaspiring man would never be tempted to steal a book. A coarse, rough working-man might be tempted to steal a sausage or a cup of beer, but not a book. A scholar might be tempted to steal a book ; a man of artistic taste might be tempted to steal an engraving or a painting, or some little work of art—and often is ; so often that it is not safe to have objects of this sort in your house. A great many honest folks steal. A great many people in good society steal. A great many persons who are accomplished steal. A great many men who are agreeable, and who in the main are upright, steal. They are men that would not rob a bank ; they are men that would not join a company of burglars, or anything like that ; but they are men who, if they saw on somebody's mantelpiece a snuff-box which was made out of a mulberry tree that Shakespeare planted in his garden, might take it up, and might be tempted to forget where they put it when they laid it down ; and therefore it might be found in their cabinet, and not in the other man's. Men are tempted to steal from taste, and from curiosity. It is one of those points that I feel incompetent to analyze—the sensation which people have when they steal ; but one thing I know, and that is, that the strength of the passion or desire for property—for works of art, or books, or what not—joined to the desire of the thing, constitutes the great power of temptation in any case. These are the two co-operating forces on which the degree of temptation depends.

Other things may come up incidentally to intensify the power of the temptation. The imagination often clothes objects with a false light. Where the imagination acts with the reason, it gives luminousness and beauty to thought. Where the imagination acts with the moral sentiments, it gives glow and attractiveness to holiness, to righteousness, to manliness. Where the imagination acts with the affections, it makes all things blossom to the eye of love. Where

the imagination hovers around the appetites and the passions, it gives to them, also, beauty and attractiveness, and within particular bounds enriches them, refines them, adorns them. But where the passions and appetites are acting under circumstances that tend to degrade, the imagination is a great quickener, and is one of the most dangerous of all influences. If a man is addicted to drink, and thinks about it, and brings up, in his imagination, the foaming tankard, or the scenes of conviviality that he has been through, or that he might go through; if in his imagination he calls for sparkling Burgundy, or for champagne; if in his imagination he grows thirsty, and thinks how good this or that kind of liquor would taste; if in his imagination he sits at the table, and has some generous fellows to treat him; if he thinks it over at night, and in the morning, and all day, and keeps it in his mind continually, though he has joined the temperance society, and though he says he is not going to drink any more, when he comes to any place where drink is kept he is all prepared to yield to temptation and gratify his desire. His imagination has got him ready, so that when the outward inducement appeals to the inward desire, he falls. If he had thought of cold water all day he would not have been tempted to drink; it would have cooled him off, so that when the temptation had been presented to him he would have had power to resist it. There are a great many temptations which befall men almost wholly through the insidious preparation, the inflammation wrought in them by the illicit and abnormal action of the imagination.

So, too, the amount of moral resistance which there is in the direction of any public sentiment will have much influence in determining the power of temptation. If the sentiment of conscience is very lax in the community, if the manners and customs are loose and low-toned, men will be far more easily biased and tempted than they would be if they were upheld by a stringent public sentiment.

Likewise, hope and fear in men will have an important relation to the power of temptation. There are very many men who feel the pressure of desire and temptation, but who are cautious and calculating. Take a person who is radiant and enthusiastic and imaginative; in other words, take a person who has just the qualities which go to make him a pleasant companion: take a person who is buoyant, and cheerful, and agreeable, and genial, and frank, take a person who is full of hope and expectation,—and he acts spontaneously. He talks without stopping to think exactly what he is going to say. He breaks out into action here and there. And as long as he is restrained by relations and circumstances so that he commits

no impropriety, it is beautiful ; but throw such a person out into life unguarded by any caution and unrestrained by any secretiveness working with conscience, and let him act spontaneously, without calculation, without pausing to inquire what may happen, and, when strong pressure is brought suddenly to bear upon him, he gives way. He is instantly carried away by influences which a more cautious man would avoid by calculation. Such men are destroyed especially by social intercourse, and by dissipations. I think it would be found, on investigation, that ninety-five per cent. of all the men who go down under temptation to an unlawful death, are men who were by nature generous, incautious, frank, genial, kindly ; and that when temptations sprang upon them they were not held back by fear or calculation. If they had only been cold, if they had only been selfish, if they had only been hard, they would not have been caught so easily. Oh ! it is a pity that the things which are so sweet and good turn so quick to acid. And yet, if you look, you will see that it is the ripest and fairest peach on the whole tree that is bored by the wasp, and has its juice sucked out. There are no such pomologists as insects are. They know the best fruit. And when temptations fly through the community, they often take the best fruits that hang upon the bough of the household—the sweet-hearted, the sympathetic, the impulsive, the beauteous ; and when temptation has shaken the tree, if there is any fruit that is not shaken off from the bough, it is the little knurly, sour, worthless crab, that is not ripe, and that is not likely to get ripe. The men that are not overthrown by temptation are often those that are censorious. They are often the critics of those that do fall. They are hard men ; they are men that are cold, and that it gives one the chills to shake hands with. They are men that never feel the swell or reverberation of passions in themselves. They are men that go rock-ribbed and stony-hearted along through life, and talk about those who give way to their feelings and go to destruction. They never give way to *their* feelings—that is sure !

Then, again, there is a social bias—the influence of those who are around men in the hour of pressure. There are times when the inducements which are brought to bear by companions determine very largely the stress and strength of temptation. Where persons stand alone in their own conscience, opposed to any wrong custom, they often have power to resist temptation ; but when the influence is exerted upon them of one, of two, of five, of ten, of a score of companions, a state of feeling is frequently produced in them through which they feel what they would not have felt if they had been alone. Men usually go in phalanxes. They

move together in companies ; and many persons are swayed who would have stood straight if they had been left merely to the influences which belonged to their proper nature.

If these general statements are true, I may say, first, that the kind of temptations which men suffer is very likely to describe pretty accurately the way in which they themselves are made up. If you find out what your temptations are, you will find out very largely what you are yourself. The directions in which you find yourself moving, and the dangers which you foresee—these are indications of the strength of the various passions and appetites and desires and affections that are within you, and will lead to a certain degree of self-knowledge. According to the declaration of the apostle, “Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust.” See which way you are drawn, if you would know what your perils are.

Secondly, no temptation is either a spell or a paralysis upon your power ; nor is it in any sense a spiritual coercion. Many suppose that Satan has the power to cast a glamour upon men. Animals are able to produce such an effect upon their victims, beyond a question. A cat will, it is said, charm a bird. It certainly has the power, by near approach, either to terrify, or in some way to control, the bird, so that it will sit still, distressed and fluttering, and let its insidious foe creep up and destroy it. I have delivered not a few birds that have been wrought upon thus. And it is thought that Satan has the power of throwing his spirit upon men in the same way. Men think that they are being tempted of the devil. Far be it from me to say that there is no temptation that issues from the inner sphere of bad spirits ; far be it from me to say that there are no arrows which come from other battle-fields than those on which we are acting here ; but I will say that there is no more power in Satan than there is in man to tempt you. The strength of temptation lies in the strength of the evil-doing faculty which is in you. If the temptation be some sinister, malign spiritual influence from without, it is no stronger because it came from Satan than it would have been if it had come from your next-door neighbor. It does not come with any more power of control. It may be a little more skillfully employed than most men employ temptation ; but it is not necessarily any more to be dreaded. I wish to disabuse your imagination and your understanding of the impression that temptations are irresistible because they proceed from cunning demoniac spirits. I desire that you should perceive that their power is regulated by the strength of the passion that is in you, and that it comes largely from the inducement presented

through your understanding to that passion. The strength of the temptation lies in the magnitude of the inducement, and in the intensity of the desire to which the inducement is presented. And whether it come from spirits or from embodied men, you are master of yourself. You are a free responsible agent, competent to consider and to determine for yourself what is right and what is wrong. And if you are heedless, if you care not, and run eagerly into evil, it is you that fall, and not Satan that pushes you over. You are destroyed by your own act—by the purposed activity of your faculties. The blame may be distributive, but your portion of it will be none the less.

If I strike a dagger home, and slay a man, I am a murderer, though I am incited to the deed by the various appliances of some cunning Iago behind me. He may be guilty as well as I; but there is no such thing as distributing guilt among the different persons engaged in a crime, so as to give a tenth to one, a tenth to another, and so on. The entire guilt is charged against each, as though there were but one.

The obvious shield or defense against temptation lies in such an ordering of a man's own nature, in the establishing within himself of such habits, in such a pre-eminence of that which is good, and such a subordination of that which is liable to evil, that when temptations come they cannot throw him from his position.

Here is a man that is irascible; that is accustomed to give way under the least provocation; that breaks out when he is irritated into railing, or bitter imprecation, or cruel action: but if he has laid the bridle upon his tongue beforehand; if he has disciplined his unruly temper; if he has brought it into subjection to his conscience, and his sense of what is becoming in manliness, and, above all, to the law of kindness,—then when inducements come, although the fire is there, the spark does not break out, and still less the flame. A regulated life, a daily and hourly preparation by the right ordering of a man's life, is a grand remedy for temptation.

There is no grace vouchsafed to those who expose themselves needlessly to temptation under circumstances where experience has shown that they are in danger. If men know where they are liable to fall, and if they have been tempted, and have fallen, woe be to them if they put themselves under the same fire again. He is foolish who would rush across the field of battle where whole batteries swept the entire space, if he could go by another and safer way; and when men, knowing that inducements will assail their strong desires, and that they are vincible, still venture, it cannot be said that they are tempted. It should rather be said that they tempt the devil to tempt them.

A man is trying to reform from intemperance, and knows that he should remain at home, or should seek some brotherhood which is in sympathy with him, in order that he may be able to maintain himself. He does mean to maintain himself ; but he is imprudent. He starts from home, and says to himself, " Well, I don't mean to go to the club to-night ; I am going down to the conference-meeting : I promised my wife that I would, and I will. He takes the car, and when he reaches the junction of Court and Fulton streets he finds himself getting out. He says, " Well, I ain't going in ; but I will just go down that way to see how it looks ; " and all the time he has a double-nature in him. There is a little hypocrite coiled up inside of him, that says, " I do not mean to let him know what he is going to do. " It tries to make him believe that he is not going to stop, but is going to the conference-meeting, as he told his wife he would ; but he knows all the time that he is going to stop. He has fallen before ; and yet when he comes to the point where he knows it is not safe for him to get off, he gets off. And though he keeps saying to himself, " I am not going in, " he does go in. When he gets there, the man, of all others that he ought not to meet, the very man who has the worst influence over him, says, " Hello ! " and takes him by both hands, and says, " I was just wishing that I could see you : I do not know why you happened to come into my thoughts ; " and puts his hand on his shoulder, and says, " Come in. " " Oh, no ; I am going to meeting. " " No, you're not going to meeting—not to-night, any how. There is a meeting in here "—and he goes in. And when he goes home, he is helped home. And the next morning there is that doleful headache, that doleful remorse, that doleful self-reproach ; and he says, " What a fool I was to go that way ! I might have known. " He did know. After that he stays at home, and does not go out for two or three days. Then he thinks he will go to the conference meeting again ; and on his way down he gets off at the same point, and goes right to the same place. He does this again and again and again, knowing all the time the liability of his weakness, and the certainty that he will fall.

Now, I say that man seeks temptation—not that temptation seeks him. There are temptations that search men out ; there are companions that run after their companions ; but there are many men who go steadily downward, feeling the force of gravity in themselves, and seeking out the instruments by which they are destroyed. There is no grace for such men, though there is a warning for them. Their experience is a trumpet-tongued warning. Their downfall is a providence of God, that should lead them to

wisdom and resistance ; but if they set it at naught, and still go on knowing where they are liable to be attacked, and courting attack, there is no grace that can save them. No grace can save any man unless he helps himself. If a man fall, he falls of his own power ; and if he get up, his own power is to be exerted in his getting up. He may have some help outside of himself ; but no outside help can relieve the absolutely helpless. It is the help of others that increases your strength, and renders you equal to emergencies. Self-care and wise prevision are indispensable to one's safety. A right knowledge, by experience, of your liabilities and your dangers ; a knowledge of places, and people, and circumstances, and times, and seasons—this is necessary if a man has gone wrong, and wishes to recover himself. A man must take heed how he does wrong, and how he has been accustomed to do wrong.

Wherefore, it is all foolishness for men to set guards over themselves where they do not need any guards, and leave broad and wide open the door where they know the attack is going to be made, and has been made a hundred times before.

Many men are very watchful against temptation on sides where they are in no danger of being tempted. Here is a man who never says ten words in a day ; he is silent and thoughtful : and he tells you that he keeps a guard over his mouth ; that he is determined not to sin by talking. But it is not by talking that he is apt to sin ; he is not in danger on that side ; and yet there is the watchman going up and down in front of that door, which does not open more than once or twice a day anyhow. Here is an ugly devil of suspicion and envy and jealousy that has possession of him, and causes him to sin ; but there is no guard over that. It is where these passions reside that his temptations come ; but he has no watchman there. He makes up for neglecting the points where the danger is, by putting all his forces at the points where there is perfect security !

Here is a man that says, "I guard myself against stinginess." Bless his dear soul ! he never had a feeling of stinginess in all his life. His trouble has always been looseness. He never could keep anything.

Here is a man who is a spendthrift, a scatterer, a ne'er-do-well, and he says, "I am determined that I will not be a miser." There is not the slightest danger of it, in his case.

But how is it with the man who *is* a miser ? He tells you that he has watched these spendthrifts through life, that he has never seen them come to any good, and that he early took warning from them, and determined that, whatever came, he would not be a squanderer, by over-benevolence, of what God gave him—and he never

has been. He watches himself continually for fear that he will give away something ; and his watch is greatly blessed !

So you shall find men watching against temptation where you could not tempt them anyhow ; and they are utterly careless of those points where they know, or might know, that they are temptable.

Is this wisdom ? Would it be wisdom in a military campaign ? Is not that the greatest battle of their lives which men are fighting for their manhood and for their immortality ? All around us are ten thousand customs, good or evil ; all around us are ten thousand influences of one kind or another, wholesome or unwholesome : and he that draws his inspiration and his hope from God ; he that walks with a perpetual sense, “Thou, God, seest me ;” he that dwells in such sympathy with the Lord Jesus Christ as to feel him a present help in time of trouble ; he that under God’s inspiration holds himself steadfast in the right, and all his appetites and passions and affections in subordination,—finds himself able to meet danger when it comes, and sees fulfilled in him that which is promised in the Word of God.

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to man. And God is faithful. He will not suffer you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear ; but he will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape.

Put on the whole armor of God, and in the day of battle have all that is needful for defense and for offense. Stand while the conflict rages ; and, after it has passed by, be found unpierced, still standing, your head protected, your heart guarded, your whole body shielded.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE come to thee, O Lord our God, neither doubting nor fearing, since thy words of promise have done away fear; and since the light of thy love has dispersed all doubt. Thou art our Father. Thy love toward thy creatures is greater than ours toward our children. Thou hast told us that if we, with all our evil and selfishness, know how to give good things to our children, much more dost thou, our Father in heaven, know how to give good things to us thy children. Thy love is perfected, and has a power which we know nothing of. Great is the realm of divine love. Wonderful is its creativeness. How far-reaching it is! How patient! How far beyond all human conception in gentleness and sympathy! How wondrous in its recovering work! How dost thou, by thy great affection, inspire others to love! How can we, with our most imperfect experiences, rise to the grandeur of the thought of that orb of love which thou art, and by which all the universe is sustained, and which is drawing toward it evermore, rank upon rank, in successive generations, those that are to become the children of light and glory? Though by searching we cannot find thee out unto perfection, yet we can find out enough of thee to rejoice our hearts, and encourage our aspirations, and inspire us when we are overburdened or shadowed by doubts and troubles. In thee is our strength. In thee is our hope and joy. And may we learn how to rejoice in the Lord.

We commend to thee thy servants. We commend to thee all who feel their need of thee. We pray that thou wilt open every heart in thy presence to-night, that each one may be able to lay bare his thought or desire before God. Search us, and try us, and see if there be any evil way in us. We pray that we may feel that God's faithfulness with us, though it bring pain, brings healing. May we rejoice in thy fidelity, knowing that a Father cannot willingly hurt his child, but only for its good! Thou hast been pleased to tell us that all thy chastisements of us are that we may become partakers of thy nature. Withhold not, then, thine hand. Grant this consummation; and may every one of thy people, from day to day, have indications of progress, and signs and tokens that they are inheriting more and more the Divine nature, and unfolding it into more gracious dispositions, into nobler purposes, into better fidelities, into purer affections, and into a life which is more like thy perpetual life.

Deliver, we beseech thee, any that are in trouble; or, if their troubles abide for their good, grant that thy Spirit, the Comforter, may find them, and dwell evermore with them. We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all that are in despondency; to all that are in doubt or fear; to all that are under the burdens of life; to all that feel the pressure of care; to all that know not which way to turn. May they find in thee a present help, relief, strength to bear their trouble, guidance out of it, light in darkness, joy in sorrow, and songs in the night.

Bless, we pray thee, all the households of this congregation. May peace dwell in every one of them. We pray that the fruits of righteousness may abound throughout the earth in all their loveliness. Grant that we may look not upon our own things only: may we have a kindly sympathy for one another, bearing each other's burdens, winning each other, and in all things fulfilling the law of love.

Grant thy blessing, we pray thee, to rest upon those who are not thy disciples; who have never named the name of Christ; who are without his Spirit; who are living in the world worldly, selfish, proud, envious, jealous. full of all self-indulgence. Will the Lord have compassion upon them. May they see the fault and the danger of their career. May they be arrested

and brought to thoughtfulness, and to a manly purpose; and, by faith in Jesus Christ, may they rise to the true dignity of their manhood here, that they may inherit their nobler selves in the life that is to come.

We pray that thou wilt bless the young—those that are in the midst of perils; those for whose feet snares are set. May they be rescued. May they grow strong under temptation, and be able to defend themselves, and to gain victories, that they may become good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We commend ourselves to thy paternal care in all the circumstances of our lives. Appoint our paths and our experiences. Bring us when and where thou wilt to the end of this life. Then, wherever death may find us, as we look upon the experiences through which we have passed on earth, may our vision be opened, and may we see that death is but the coming of the Son of Man. Then, lifted by power from on high up to where thou art, and into thy presence, may we rejoice with exceeding great joy.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and ever. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt let thy blessing rest upon the word spoken, and grant that it may do good to all that are present. May it quicken the watchfulness of those who are in peril. Grant, if there be those who are surrounded by the sweet influences of home, and the blessed associations of Christian friends and relations, and who find little to tempt them, that they may be the succorers of those who are tempted. May those who go forth in perilous ways, and in the midst of dangers, be so trained in truth, and justice, and purity, that they shall pass through these perilous ways unharmed. Deliver us all, in the day of our strength, from the perils that are incident to every-day life. May we search ourselves to know where we are liable to fall, and what is the point at which we continually break down. Search thou us. Give us the illuminating influences of the divine Spirit; and grant that thus we may go on safely, day by day, trusting in God, until, at last, we are brought into thy presence, where we shall sin no more, and be tempted no more, and where we shall be as the angels of God. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

THE PATERNAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

"After this manner, therefore, pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven."—Matt. vi. 9.

Who may say this prayer? Is it a prayer limited to the use of the sectarian, the elect? or is it universal? May it be employed by every one that desires to approach God? Is it His title? Does it, as far as anything can, set forth the true, the actual nature of God, to which our thoughts must address themselves? Have we a right to determine the government of God, the divine nature, and the providence of God, from a title such as this?

In our time, no subject is more in men's thoughts than the metes and bounds and the true nature of the Divine government under which we live, and by which we are being fashioned for the other and the higher life. It is a government which depends for its nature and efficacy upon the character of the Supreme Governor from whose will proceed laws.

To ascertain the true nature of God, and the true nature of the divine government over us, taxes men's curiosity—something better than that, their whole moral nature—just in proportion as they are developed, and grow strong.

When men are low, and lacking in sensibility, it seems little to them to throw themselves away; there is little to throw away: but when by culture and by divine grace men have unfolded the faculties of their souls, and the feeling power of true manhood, it becomes more and more a question of transcendent importance, "What shall become of us?" They cannot afford to make shipwreck of themselves.

This is a universal prayer. The oldest and the youngest, the best and the worst, the most cultured and developed, and the savage, just putting one foot before the other in his upward path, all may draw near to God by this sacred appellation.

But, considering the imperfect conditions in which moral emotions and personal affections are developed in this life; how much belongs to us here by reason of our material structure; how much, therefore, is relative; how much falls out in the way of life from our weakness; how many of our actions are necessary, but are not typical of the highest forms of human actions,—considering all these things, have we a right to determine the divine nature by such a figure as that of fatherhood among men? That there is, in the life and necessary history of every parent a great deal that is to be thrown out, a great deal that cannot be employed as material by which to interpret the divine nature, all will admit; but the substantial nature of *man*—that is, his thinking nature, his affectional nature, and his moral nature—are alphabetic elements from which he can spell out something of the divine nature. To say that the moral endowments of men are not like the attributes of God in kind; to say that Deity differs from humanity in quality; to say that truth with us is a different thing from truth in God; to say that moral discriminations as made by men are different, not in purity and accuracy, but in kind, from moral discriminations as made by God; to say that thought-power in man differs from thought-power in God, not in degree, and not in scope, but in nature—to say these things is to prove that men have been deceived. We have been deceived in those only elements by which we can form a conception of God, if these are not true and valid rules or measures of interpretation.

I am commanded to be just; I am commanded to be perfect as God is perfect; and I attempt, taking the best actions of the best men in their best moods, under divine guidance, to bring myself under that which is just and perfect, and into all those thoughts and feelings and actions which I see exhibited in the highest specimens of my fellow-men; but if these are false models, unlike the divine nature, then I am beguiled, and I can neither interpret nor worship the divine nature aright. I throw my prayers into the darkness, under such circumstances. The Being that I fashion to myself may or may not be God, and the divine nature becomes a fiction which every man writes to suit himself.

What would be thought of a government that should impose a tax of so many dollars upon every man's property, and leave him to suppose that the measure of the tax was to be interpreted by the term *dollar*, until the time of payment came, when it should be found that the government had attached a different value to a dollar from that which was attached to it among the people?

What would be thought if a contract should be entered into with

the Government to furnish a certain quantity of timber for the navy, and when it came to be delivered, it should be found that the Government had a rule entirely different from the carpenter's rule by which men usually measure?

What would be thought if a contract should be made with the Government for a supply of stone, and iron, and copper, and lead, and wood, or any other articles, and when they came to be delivered, it should be found that the ideas of the Government were entirely different from the current ideas in regard to these things, and it should turn out that what was generally called stone was not stone, and iron was not iron, according to the interpretation of the Government?

What possible connection could be kept up with a government that should leave men to hold one idea, while itself acting upon another entirely different idea? We are told to love truth and righteousness, to seek for holiness, and to cultivate benevolent dispositions; but if those dispositions, the capacity for which God has implanted in us, are not correct interpretations of the quality of God's nature, then we are deceived, and the organic structure of truth and justice and honor cannot be understood among men as they are understood with God.

We admit that all human moral faculties act in a lower sphere, and under conditions of imperfection; but we assert that the essential quality of truth is the same among men and with God; that honor and rectitude and justice and love are substantially the same; that men can therefore argue from their own personal knowledge and experience; and that it is fair to argue from the fatherhood of men to the fatherhood of God, and from the government of the family to the divine government.

Nor do we need to stand alone upon our own inference. This very question is adjudicated by our Saviour in the seventh chapter of Matthew. He there says:

"Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened [speaking of the intercourse of men's souls with God]. Or what man is there of you who, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?"

Then, as if meeting the objection that arose in men's minds, "Oh yes, but God is God," he says:

"If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more [in the same line, in the same direction, in the same development] shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

That is to say, the inferences which are derived in respect to the divine nature and government from the best developments of men

are legitimate, only the reality will transcend immeasurably all human conceptions. It will bring forth more glorious and more bountiful fruit than we are apt to suppose. It is safe to argue from the best developed fatherhood among men to the fatherhood of God, and from family government to the divine government.

We are not, however, to commit the error of transferring to the divine government everything that belongs to fatherhood among men, nor everything that belongs to human government in its rude and imperfect execution.

Let us look a little at what a true government includes. Leaving out all enfeeblements and imperfections, and taking the ideal of a well-ordered family government, I aver, first, that the children are connected to the parents by a like nature, and by actual descent from them, so that they partake of their being. They are, if it may be said, an extension of the parents. The parent, therefore, is related to the child in some sense as to his own self.

Secondly, the family is made up thus of parents and children that are essentially connected ; and it has its own economy. It has a little kingdom of its own. It has its own aims. It undertakes to rear children to manhood, from weakness and ignorance to old age. It attempts to so subordinate and so harmonize its elements that each and every member shall attain to his greatest strength, and reap the greatest amount of happiness consistent with his condition. Therefore it has its rules and regulations ; it has its code of permissions and its code of things forbidden ; it has its right and its wrong ; it has its little commonwealth organized with laws, pains and penalties, and remunerations and rewards, seeking the common end and the common good of the whole.

In such a commonwealth there must needs be, and there is, subordination. All are not equal and alike. If there is subordination, there must be obedience ; and if there is obedience, there must be the means of enforcing it.

In every family the government ranges from the lowest to the highest forms. That is, every parental government has in itself something of three kinds of government, as men of analysis look at it. Every family government has in it physical coercion. The child cannot do what it has a mind to. If it would run into the fire, the mother does not hesitate to employ the law of violence. If it would take poison instead of food, the father hinders it by physical strength. The children are to be fed, and clothed, and washed, and dressed. While yet they are in their infancy, they are to be cared for. In a thousand particulars the government of the family consists in the physical control of the children, as experience has

taught us that the great physical world in certain respects is governed.

But besides that, there is in the father and in the mother of every family, as looked up to by the child, a kind of magistracy. For the father and mother do not think of Thomas and James and William as though they were alone in the family. There is a brood of six or eight children, and the father and mother have a relation in common to them all, and they govern them with reference to the welfare of all in accordance with certain abstract considerations derived from experience ; so that in some sense the father is a magistrate, and adjudicates, in each instance, not alone for the child with whom he is dealing, but indirectly for the other children. And yet, while he is using physical force and magisterial authority in the household, it is the persuasive influence and affection of the father that gives both of these their influence, and that sums up in itself the highest conception of government. The parental government, which is by name the government of the father over his children, includes in it physical power, magisterial power, and love power.

The distinctive peculiarity, then, of the government of the household, is, first, that it is personal. Even when rules and principles are employed, they are employed by a visible father and mother, and they are enforced by the sympathetic and vital presence of the parents.

Secondly, the father and mother and children are related to a common good, seeking it all together. Neither is sacrificed to the others. The father and mother are superior ; and yet their superiority takes nothing from the children. It is the grand foundation of their hope and expectation. The sovereignty of the father and mother neither breaks the child's will nor stands in the way of the child's freedom ; but in it the child learns to have a full use of itself, and to become free.

Thirdly, love is the overruling influence in every family government. It seeks the welfare of the children. All true fathers and mothers govern for the sake of the children, and not for the sake of the family. It is not that they have in mind the abstract ideal of the household, to which they sacrifice their children. Their idea is that the children are to be reared aright, and that any amount of thought, and pains, and care, and suffering that is necessary for the rearing of the children is to be expended.

Not only is this love the fountain of all influence, but it directs, modifies, limits, the administration of every single element of influence which is brought to bear for the welfare of the children.

This, as we read the household, is parental government. It is a

personal government, a government that proceeds from the principle of love, a complex government, employing all influences, physical, magisterial and persuasional, from the lowest to the highest. We analyze government, we classify it, and say, "So much of it is physical, so much of it is persuasive or authoritative, and so much of it is automatic or involuntary; and in the sight of God, without doubt it includes all these elements, the highest combinations and developments of them being what we call the love government, or parental government—the government of a father.

This being stated, I remark, first, that a government of laws is entirely consistent with the parental and personal character of the Divine moral government.

The tide of discovery is setting so strong toward the methods by which God created and is controlling the world, that many drift into the idea that there is no other government in the world but one of law; that our whole duty consists in finding out, as fast as we can, just what are the laws of our condition; and that this is as near to God as we can get. And now men are beginning to scout the idea of the existence of a personal God altogether. They are beginning to say, "God is nothing but the sum of creation. He is the All-things. He is the root and the seed both. The globe, in its frame-work, and motion, and distributive force and thinking-power, is God,"—and that is pantheism. Men, seeing that health depends upon compliance with the laws of health, and that happiness consists in compliance with the laws of a man's condition, relatively, are coming more and more to be thoughtful. They think that perhaps, after all, too great an emphasis has been laid upon the personality of God. But it seems to me that without the thought of personality there can be no true conception of God whatsoever; and that every man, out of the instincts of his own nature, when he is set free from an artificial philosophy, craves a personal administration. Laws infixed in matter are the expressions of divine will; and the administration of them is by the personal power of God, the invisible. And the fact of a retinue of laws does not exclude the administration of them by a personal God. It may be that everything in nature is under the cognition of God. For we find that we differ from the inferior animals in this: that we can take in complex relations; that we see a multitude of things at a time; that the perception of myriads of details is compatible with the perception of the generic whole. And the extension of this constitution, the knowledge of it, gives us the idea of a God who has power so transcendent that he can look upon every insect, and every bird, and every beast, and every single thing that exists on this

globe, and on all globes, as easily as a man can look upon the details of any complex whole.

Take a savage that only knows how to use simple instruments, such as a bow and an arrow, a hatchet and knife, and when you show him a complicated machine in which there is propulsion and yet restraint, in which there is balance and yet impulse, he is unable to comprehend it. He cannot grasp complexity in simplicity and unity; but to a man who has large culture, it is easily comprehensible. He is competent to take a million things to make one. And as you go up step by step among men, you find that according to human judgment that is the greatest man who has the largest power in this direction. You carry out that conception when you conceive of One who has such analytical power that all the details of creation are as plain to him as the different wheels of a watch are to the watchmaker.

“The government of natural law”—a phrase so much used in our time—does not, then, limit or exclude the idea of a personal government. As a father in the household is able to govern every one of the children personally, and yet have a wise consideration of law, as applied to the clothing, to the feeding, and to the restraining of the whole; as natural law is easily applied by the personal administration of the parent over the child; so, in the larger sphere, we can perceive that God may have a personal government of providence, employing natural law for the execution of his purposes toward his children.

I believe in the existence of laws, and I would encourage any efforts to search them out and bring them more accurately to our knowledge. I should, however, bewail any such belief in the existence of laws in nature as excluded the sense of a personal God who, through those laws and by them, maintained a personal relation to every man, and to his development and fate in the divine providence—a providence which works through laws. I should deplore anything which did away with the belief in a personal God who maintains his relation through and through the organization of nature, and can make it direct or general, as he pleases. The idea of a personal God includes the physical, the magisterial, and the personal element—and in this order. The lowest is the physical, the intermediate is the magisterial, and the highest is the personal.

We frequently meet such loose and careless expressions as this: “I do not believe in a God of force and cruelty; I believe that God is a Father”—meaning by that, moral indifference; meaning that God does not care what men do; that he is so good-natured that he makes no exact rules, and lays no commands upon his

children that are coercive or painful. And when I hear men talking thus, I say, at once, this is a paternal government which lays aside natural law. Natural law does not necessarily inhere in paternal government, and the idea that only good nature shall prevail in the divine government is far from correct. Anger, even, is not incompatible with God's character as a Father. It is well, sometimes, to get angry. A man who cannot get angry is like a stream that cannot overflow ; that is always turbid ; on which float logs, and sticks, and leaves, and dust, and dirt ; and which turns into quagmire. Sometimes indignation is as good as thunder. There are thunder-showers outside of a man ; and what is anger, in this higher sense of the term, but the electric impulse given to every part of a man's nature ? Love, without it, is as insipid as molasses ! We need the fire, the impulse, the driving-force that belongs to indignation. Not a narrow, selfish kind of anger, not waspish irritation, not the lower forms of anger, but the large combativeness of the whole soul arraying itself against wrong and evil—that we need, whether it be in God or men.

Far be it from me to suppose that God is a vast pillowy Being, soft as feathers are, white as down is, and powerless as they. Energy, might, intensity of force, belong to our God, and may be consistent with the utmost lenity, and the utmost gentleness, and the utmost love. For love is not one thing ; it is the mother of all things. Love is that quiver which has a hundred arrows in it. Sometimes it acts by pleasure, and sometimes by pain ; sometimes by persuasion, and sometimes by coercion ; sometimes by command, and sometimes by invitation. Out of love come truth and justice, and out of love comes that coercive influence by which justice and truth shall be made to prevail in the world.

Let us not, therefore, preach God's Fatherhood as being a comprehensive title for inanity ; for a kind of half-asleep, smiling good-nature, by which men are allowed to do about what they please, and to do it as they please. That view is contradicted not only by the Word of God, but by every ideal through which we form a notion of fatherhood. You do not believe in men and women with such characters as some men attribute to God. The father and mother you look back to and revere, loved you, and you knew they loved you ; but they loved you so that they meant to make something of you, and whipped you as well as coaxed you. They sought your good, but they did not spare your cries. They sought by the application of government from the top to the bottom—by the co-operative use of the physical, the magisterial and the personal elements of fatherhood—to bring you to manhood.

Such is paternal government, I think, at large. The love of holiness, the love of truth, the love of purity, the love of love—these are the grand aims which God is pursuing in his great household, for their sake. He chastens whom he loves, and scourges every son whom he receives. No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. You do not enjoy pain when it is being laid on; but afterwards, it often affords you comfort, when you see what comes from its being laid on.

Thirdly, the personal element in God explains the difficulties which have been introduced into theology from the Scripture use of the terms “law,” “king,” “sovereign,” etc. Men infer that if God is sovereign, he may do substantially that which all sovereigns do; and there have been introduced into theology, in the explanations of the suffering of Christ, of the atonement of Christ, and of the conditions of both, from the side of visible and monarchical governments, elements of reasoning which I hold to be not true, when we consider God as a personal Father. For men say, “As kings cannot govern their subjects except by the power of laws, so God cannot govern the universe except by the power of laws.” I will not stop to carry out that line of thought, but will simply say that there is just this difference between sovereignty in God and sovereignty among men. Fatherhood is a perfect ideal of government, and we see it largely exhibited now and then, in small groups; but ten or twelve men are hardly enough to carry out perfect government, and apply physical, intellectual and social elements in their highest forms, and to their full extent.

Now, the state grows out of the family. First there is the tribe; then there is a collection of tribes; and then there is the state: and where a monarchy prevails, the head man is a chieftian or king, and the others are his subjects; and he governs them by laws, and not by his personal influence. In other words, the weakness of man is such that he has to build upon the next best thing to personality. He cannot employ the best expedient. The best is that which we see practiced where a man governs his child by all the varied forms of law, from the physical up to the moral, employing his personal power as a driving motive; but in a little time the multitude of a man's affairs is such that he cannot lend so much of his personal influence to those around him. A king is an abstraction to his subjects. The great majority of them never see him; and he never sees them. No king can see every one that is under him; and he has to resort to the next best thing. By reason of

that weakness which belongs to all men ; not by reason of their strength and excellence, not because it is best abstractly, but because it is best under the circumstances, the king enforces government by law. He sits back, unseen, and governs by imperfect instruments. Such is human weakness that it is not permitted to any man, whether he be judge or king, to exercise his personal feelings. We say of a judge, "He should be colorless ;" and of a king, "He should be colorless ;" we say that no personal feeling should enter into their adjudication. This is the best conception of a human judge or king, but it is not the best conception of an ideal judge or king. The reason is that it is not safe to allow the human magistrate to bring his own judgment into adjudication, because he is so weak. He must govern by certain rules. This is the best he can do.

Human governments are, after all, but bungling affairs. The worst thing in this world, next to anarchy, is government. It is a machine without which men cannot very well live, and with which they have not been able to live very well. It is better than a herd of wolves and bears in the woods ; but, after all, if you take an inventory of the injustice that has been perpetrated and the mischiefs that have taken place under law ; if you take an inventory of all the sufferings which have come from the want of feeling in kings, sovereigns, governors, and judges, no books could hold them. Vast beyond all conception is the volume of suffering that has fallen out under the clumsy attempt to administer by law instead of by personal influence ; but if a judge were so good, and everybody knew it, that his love would be wise, then everybody would say, "It is better to let him act according to his sense of right and wrong, and according to the impulses of his moral nature."

The worst of it is, that most men's feelings are frowy,—they are spoiled, and it is not safe to use them ; it is far safer to use fixed laws. If they were larger and better, they would be more nearly safe. The next best thing is the family. Nothing is safer than the government of a father. So an absolute monarch would be the ideal of a perfect government, provided he knew more than everybody else, and was better than everybody else. To put goodness into every act of life would be the ideal of human government ; and a human government whose every act is good would be a type of the divine government. Goodness represents fatherhood ; and father is higher than king. Coercive laws are necessary, and must be employed ; but coercive laws are lower than the personal presence of the governor. He includes in himself all the elements of right action, and brings them to bear by personal thought and feeling ; and he is so unerring, so true, so accurate, always and forever,

that he never makes a mistake. Therefore the personal government of God stands infinitely above a magisterial or kingly government. A magisterial government may be useful and adapted to the wants of men ; but when you associate the weakness of human governments with the divine government, and attempt to explain by it the unfolding of God's decrees, and to make the sufferings of Christ simple obeisance to law, as if a law were superior to a father or to God ; when you make divine suffering a commercial equivalent—so much for so much ; when you transfer the whole rattling machinery of earthly government to the council-chamber of heaven, and take from God the personality of his being, you deprive him of that fatherhood which is the chief attribute that makes him God. For he says, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy. I use law for restraint, where it is the best instrument by which I can reach my subjects ; but law is my servant. It interprets my mind and will as far as it goes ; but I have a mind and will that is not interpreted by law. I am better than the best expressions of goodness, purer than the best symbols of purity, and nobler than the best representations of nobility. I am not bound to give servile adhesion to any particular forms of law. Therefore I am free to have mercy on whom I will.”

The highest form of government is paternal ; and paternal government is personal. It is coercive, vindictory, and even avenging at times, and therefore it is pain-inflicting ; but it is distinctively and peculiarly a government that means good, and good to the very end. No blind philosophical ideal stands up in the presence of the Divine Being as something more beautiful, more excellent than the welfare of his subjects. There is nothing so important before God as mankind. The supreme purpose, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of the divine paternal government over men, is their welfare.

But does God not seek his own glory ? That is his glory. What is the glory of a father but his children ? What is the glory of a mother but her household ? Who ever feels in his own achievements the same joy and elevation that he feels in learning that those who sprang from his loins, and whom he has, by care, by labor, and often by suffering, brought up to manhood, stand well equipped in life, and are honored by their fellow-men ? Where is there any diadem that crowns a father's head as his children do ? And what is there that God looks upon and sees to be more beautiful and glorious than the trooping millions that come from all worlds and all periods of time, seeking the heavenly gate, and crying out, “Father ! Father ! Father !”

It is to this end that the divine personal government uses power,

punishment and reward, fear and hope. It is that they may work together for the good of all who belong to the household of God.

Here, then, is the true conception, to my mind, of the great doctrine of the moral government of God, and of paternal government. It is, to my mind, a true explanation of the government of God—a government that is full of resources, and that has forever guiding it and limiting it, directing it and impelling it, this great central soul, that seeks universal goodness and final happiness, and that discloses itself in society on earth, where not only by physical, social and magisterial law, but by fatherly, personal government, men are raised and prepared for a life of immortality.

A God who takes care of the universe because it will cause him to be praised, I cannot love. Christ taught me that selfishness is hateful; and I do not think it to be less hateful because it is infinite. If to live with all one's thought-power, with all one's executive force, with all one's influence in every sphere of life, in order to make one's self great, is hateful in men, it would be infinitely more hateful in God, because he is so much larger than men.

You may crown the devil by as many names as you please, I will not worship him. I will not worship cruelty nor vengeance; I will not worship self-adulation nor self-conceit; I will not worship mere power; but I will worship goodness, that carries with it self-respect, and authority, and government, and command, and threat, and execution; I will worship goodness, that, governing through long periods, and through many generations, is patient, and long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and goodness, seeking man's augmentation, purification, ennobling and immortality. That God whose name is Love; that God, if you choose to call him so, who is a consuming fire (for what consumes like the fire of love? what is so searching, so cleansing, so stimulating as that?); that God whose name is Power—power in love; that God whose name is Justice—the justice of love; that God whose name is above every name, and all names; that God who, when all the earth has presented its aspects, its symbols, its experiences, and these have been clustered into one great memorable name, is still the nameless God, standing in eternity, and saying, “I am what I am”—that God, by his grandeur, subdues my soul. Him I love. To him I yield up my personality, and to none other. May we all be so guided by right-living, by right-thinking, and by the providence and grace of this God who governs all for the good of all, that we, at last, shall rise through the mists and the mistakes, through the burdens and the troubles, through the errors and the sins of this mortal life, and see him as he is, and be like him.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU dost not need our supplication—thou that causest the sun to rise and the seasons to come, and dost pour from the hand of bounty the ineffable blessings of life; thou that knowest what things we have need of before we ask, and art always doing exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think. It is for our sakes that thou hast commanded us to draw near and to ask. Thus thou dost make thy gifts more fruitful of good to us; thus thou teachest us gratitude for the things which we receive. Thou dost grant to our eye, to our ear, and to our hand infinite mercies, which teach us to live by faith, by hope, by love, by gratitude. We rejoice that thus we associate with thee all things which are most benign and most beautiful in life. All the things upon the earth which thou hast fashioned, do speak of thee to those who are instructed to hear what they say. All things work together for good to them that love thee, or interpret thy providence through love. We rejoice in thee; we rejoice in thy disclosures of thyself; and yet we know that we are standing afar off; that we are scarcely within the circuit; that we certainly cannot draw near. By searching we cannot find thee out nor understand thee to perfection. When we behold thee as thou art, thou wilt be infinitely more glorious, transcending the uttermost conception which we form of thee upon earth; for we are not only children, but very babes; and we scarcely understand at all the things which we look upon. For the eye cannot discern the things of God; nor can the heart comprehend them; and thou, God, canst not reveal them to us until thou dost transform us; until we are purged of the flesh; until we rise into the spirit-land, and see thee with new disclosures in ourselves, and with transcendent beauty in thyself. We rejoice though we are thus in the twilight, and believe that the dawn is coming, and that the full daylight shall be ours, and that we shall, though we may lose many a fancy and fable, find the Father to be more glorious than it enters into the heart of man to conceive. Thy justice, thy truth, thy fidelity, thine ineffable love, the glory of thy power, and the wisdom of thine administration—these we shall never understand in this life. Thy ways are past finding out here. They will spread and expand in new varieties, and with new developments, far beyond any that we have. Thou wilt shine forever and forever in transcendent glory.

Be pleased to so fashion us that when we pass from these mortal shores we may be counted worthy to stand near to thee, to behold thee, and to take, at least, thy light as our robe and our righteousness.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt prepare us for this translation by the cure of every fault, by the forgiveness and healing of every sin, and by leading us from the ways of selfishness, and undue pride, and vanity, into the ways of purity, of peace, of benevolence, of faith, of trust, of obedience in all things.

Wilt thou grant, this morning, to thy servants that are drawn hither, the blessing of thy presence and the communion of thy Spirit. May they have that spiritual influence resting upon them which shall stir up their life within them. May they feel that they are not far from God, and that he is drawing them near to him by his promises. May they now be able to open their innermost souls before thee. May they take the things which they desire for themselves or for others. May they have courage to confess their sins, and to resolve in the strength of God to overcome them. May they take hold by faith again upon the service of God, and seek in all ways to fulfill the mind and will of the Spirit.

We pray that thou wilt grant to those who are in despondency, and darkness, and sorrow, the comfort of thy presence. May thy rod and thy staff comfort them.

We pray that thou wilt grant a blessing to those who are burdened with care; who are distracted by the ways of the world; who are borne down by the duties that devolve upon them. May they, to-day, have rest in God. May their waning courage rise once more. May they be able to bear their cross wherever it is and whatever it is. May they feel that it is the hand of God that hath placed it upon them in their weakness, not to crush them, but to impart strength to them.

We pray that thou wilt help every one to carry his own sorrow. If it may not be removed, may there be grace to bear it. May thy grace be sufficient for every one.

Wilt thou grant to each soul that is in doubt and uncertainty such a measure of the revelation of God as shall be food, as shall be guidance, as shall give both strength and direction. We pray that thou wilt be with all those who are striving in a Christian life, but who, by reason of their own weakness, and by reason of the obscurity of the way, find themselves beclouded and drawn aside by numerous difficulties. May they not give up their hope. May they still hold fast to the faith of Christ Jesus. Though they may be weak and feeble; yea, though they may not be able themselves to go down into the waters that are stirred, still may they look up to thee and be consoled. Speak comfortable things to them, and cheer them, that they may renew their consecration. Though they fall a hundred times, may they rise again, and pursue their onward course.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant thy blessing to all the households that are represented here. Be pleased to quicken them; to strengthen them; to comfort them; to fill them with light and with joy.

We pray for the young, for those who are in the midst of life, and for those that are aged. We pray for strangers in a strange land. We pray for all those that are overthrown in their hope and expectation. We pray for all who are in despondency. We pray for those who do not pray for themselves. We pray for those who are cast out of our sympathies. We pray for those whom society rejects. We pray for the despoiled of every name. We pray for those who are overthrown by temptations and by sins. We beseech of thee that they may find a Rescuer, a Savior.

We ask thy blessing upon all those who to-day make known the truth to the ignorant; upon all that go forth to comfort those that are in affliction, to carry light to those that are in darkness, to visit the solitary, the imprisoned, or the sick. May all the children of mercy receive mercy at the hand of God, and be greatly comforted in their own souls, and be able, by the consolation wherewith they are comforted, to comfort also all those who are in afflictions.

We pray for the churches of Christ of every name, and for all that preach the Gospel. We beseech of thee that they may see eye to eye. We beseech of thee that heart may be responsive to heart; that divisions may cease; that envyings and jealousies may be done away; and that there may be more sympathy, more co-operation, and more pressing forward for good things under right motives. May the world, that hath so long beheld quarrels and contentions in thy church, see them rapidly come to an end. In this world, where hate hath been so sovereign, and hath so divided men, may we see love growing mightier, and bringing men together, and uniting them, and preparing them for that great and final work by which the earth is to be transformed, and by which the new heaven and the new earth shall come, in which are to dwell righteousness.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer us for Christ Jesus' sake. Amen.

THE NATURE, IMPORTANCE AND LIBERTIES OF BELIEF.

“Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him.”—John ix. 35-38.

It is very plain to any one at all acquainted with the literature and the habits of thought in the two lands—the Hebrew and the Grecian—that *belief* in Jerusalem meant one thing, and that *belief* at Athens meant another and a very different thing. If, at Jerusalem, a man believed, it was taken in a religious sense, as a token of personal fealty to God. It was understood to be the relation of a man's own self to his Master. It was regarded in the sense of the perfect and absorbing fidelity of a soldier to his general, of a clansman to his chief, or of a child to his parent. But in Greece, although there was belief, yet, in the philosophic sense of the term, believing was interpreted to mean the accepting of certain definite propositions of truth or fact. It was, therefore, in the main, an intellectual process.

After our Master's ascent, the preaching of the early day was the preaching of Christ, and of his simple teaching, for the sake of producing a given condition of life and character. This was peculiarly in accordance with the genius of the Hebrews.

I have already said, on a recent occasion, that, in the early periods of the Church, the power of the Christian religion was manifested more by the example of Christians than by any formal setting forth of creeds, or by any philosophic cogency of truths which must have lain at the bottom of those creeds.

After a time, however, creed-making came into vogue. It sprang, in the first instance, from the Greeks. It expanded itself mainly, in so far as the Greek schools were concerned, in defining

and organizing the faith of the early ages in respect to the great themes of divinity—the nature of God, the nature of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and their co-operative relation, trinity in unity. The speculations of the Greek mind tended toward the psychological elements, as they were then understood.

When, later, the Roman mind began to exercise itself upon creeds, the lower forms of truth naturally came in. The elaboration of moral government, and the organization of the Church, and the establishment of its ordinances and polity, were largely the work of the Roman mind.

So that we had first, simple Christianity, as it appeared among the Jews, evolving power by the life which it educed. Then came in, running through centuries, the Greek mind, formulating higher phases of morality in respect to the divine nature. Afterwards came the Roman genius, fashioning the visible material Church, the vast ecclesiastical system, and giving, also, a large increment to the creeds of Christendom. And it came to pass, in those days, not only that the Church grew, but that it grew more and more into a national form; and belief became very largely what crime and virtue or obedience are in the civil government. As a good citizen is one who obeys the laws and fulfills a citizen's duties, and as a bad citizen is one who breaks the laws and commits vice and crime, so he was a good churchman who believed in the Church and what the Church taught, and he was a bad churchman or Christian—for they were considered as identical—who did not believe in these things. And as it was held that the salvation of men's souls depended upon their right believing, the next and the legitimate and logical deduction was, that it was more important to mankind that they should be compelled to believe, for the sake of their soul's salvation in the future, than that they should enjoy present comfort. Then arose persecution for belief's sake in the Roman Church, which, in the period of men's ignorance, became universal, but which, after the Reformation set in, slowly waned.

As late as the time of Elizabeth, belief in the actual presence of the Holy Communion was a matter of life and death in England. No one who has considerably read the history of that period—and the impression cannot be more vividly derived from any other work than Froude's, which, with all its faults, is a brilliant and admirable history of England—can fail to see that to believe right on the question of the Lord's Supper was just as important as it was to live right with reference to the most vital laws of property in the state. Treason against orthodoxy was just as fatal as treason against sovereignty; and the state attempted to enforce the law

against both. When right believing was the condition on which a man held his property, his place in the state, and his very life, you can very well understand that creeds had an importance which they have slowly lost.

Then intense earnestness in the inculcation of the infallibility of the Roman Church and of ecclesiasticism in the Episcopal Church took another shape in what were called "reformed" churches. They were reformed in respect to jealousy of creeds. Right believing was considered as equivalent to right living. And during the days of enforced faith it was a matter of life and death to believe right.

And when the power of this monstrous superstition was so far broken that men were allowed to believe in Roman, or Episcopal, or Presbyterian, or any other sectarian scheme of doctrine, the spirit was not gone; for each sect took the matter of belief into its own creed, and though it disavowed any authority over men at large, it exerted a powerful authority upon all its own members. The Roman Church still insisted upon all the doctrines of Romanism. The Reformed Church of England insisted upon the apostolicity and authority of that Church. The Presbyterian Church, following Calvin, insisted upon its peculiar doctrines. The Genevese churches insisted on the doctrines which were special to them. All the so-called evangelical churches emphasized the necessity of being sound in the faith. It was considered a great stretch of charity when, in Holland, it was determined to insist only upon adhesion to the commands, to leave men at liberty in non-essentials to believe either way, and to hold them to account and discipline simply for believing those things which were necessary to the formation of Christian character.

Now, it turned out that in all beliefs and in all churches there were Christian men, their fruits being taken as the criterion of judgment. It was found that the Arminian Church had in it good Christian men. It was found that the Arians had good Christian men among them. It was discovered that the grace of God could find elements of Christianity in the hearts of men who stood over against the Church in matters of creed. And so there began to be a powerful reaction—a reaction which might have been expected from the undue rigor with which believing had been enforced by pain and penalty through many hundreds and even thousands of years.

In our day, we are at the extreme of reaction against creeds. Almost everybody, now-a-days, is denouncing dogmas; and not half of those that do it know what they mean by *dogmas*. Almost

everybody is denouncing systems of theology ; and it would task the majority of those that do it to give any sort of an account of what is meant by *systems of theology*. Multitudes of men are talking about right living and right dispositions being the main thing. They say, " If you have these, it does not matter what your theology is." In one sense this is true ; and yet, we are at the other extreme of reaction. We are going as far in opposition to the enunciation of precise, accurate, systematized belief, as our forefathers went in favor of it.

I propose, this morning, to offer some considerations on the subject of the nature of belief, of its importance, and of its liberties.

One first meets the question, " Is belief a normal and legitimate state of mind, subject to every man's will in such a sense that he is accountable for what he believes?" My reply is, that our belief is partly voluntary, and partly involuntary ; and that in so far as it is voluntary we are accountable for it, while in so far as it is constitutional, and dependent on circumstances over which we have no control, we are not accountable for it.

A man is accountable, for instance, for the state and disposition with which he comes to the investigation of truth. If there be a life hereafter, and if the law of cause and effect continue as a man approaches the gulf of death in such a manner that the way in which he lives here determines the way in which he will live in the world to come—at any rate, during the initial periods of his existence there—then it is of transcendent importance that a man should form a religious belief according to facts and according to the truth. In other words, it is a man's duty to attend to the subject, and to think about it. He is bound to put his mind in such an attitude that he shall be likely to think right. He is so to discharge all prejudices, and partial biases, and partisan influences from his mind, that he can attend to the evidences of the truth fairly and honestly. A man is called upon to investigate. He is responsible for right belief ; and if from neglect of investigation he believes wrong, or does not believe at all, he is culpable for the wrong belief or the unbelief.

On the other hand, there is much of men's belief that they cannot help. If a man, for instance, have an arithmetical proposition presented to him, it is not the question whether he will or will not accept it. If it be presented so that it can be comprehended, he *must* accept it. Two and two make four, not because you have a right mind, not by any courtesy on your part, and not on account of the faith which men have in the results of arithmetic : it is imperative. But where men are investigating a

large field of truths, it is unquestionably true that the character of the mind which they bring to the investigation will determine largely the way in which they see the truth. A man who has a mere factual nature ; a man who perceives without much power of reflection ; a man who sees only facts, cannot come to any such judgment of truths as the man, higher than he, who not only perceives facts, but has also, by his mental constitution, the power to reason upon them, and to deduce the generic from the specific—that is, the principle from the facts. If it be investigation into the nature of truth as it is contained in the Word of God, a man's moral disposition will color his beliefs. If one, for instance, be largely conscientious, and endowed with small benevolence, the nature of his mind will make him sensitive to those representations of Scripture which depict God as standing upon law ; as maintaining righteousness ; as being good and just, rather than benevolent and sympathetic. If, on the other hand, a man be himself kind and benevolent, and if he have little conscientiousness, then the elements of sympathy will predominate in the God that he depicts, and the elements which tend towards legality will be comparatively wanting in him. Evidence of justice and law will make but a small impression on such a man, while evidence of goodness will make a prodigious impression upon him.

Now, evidence to a man is that which convinces his mind. It varies with different men. An argument to a man who cannot reason is no evidence. Facts are no evidence to a man who cannot perceive them. A sentimental appeal is evidence to a man whose very nature moves by emotion, though it may not be to his neighbor.

So then, when men come to the investigation of truth, they are responsible, first, for research, for honesty therein, for being diligent, and for attempting to cleanse their minds from all bias of selfishness and pride. They are responsible for sincerity and faithfulness in the investigation of truth. And when they go beyond that to the use of their faculties, the combination of those faculties will determine very largely, not, perhaps, the generic nature of truth, but specific developments of it. And as long as the world stands there will be men who will hold that God is a God of infinite love and sympathy and goodness with a residuum of justice ; and there will be men who will believe that God is a God of justice with a residuum of love and sympathy and goodness ; and each will follow the law of his own mind. As a magnet, drawn through a vessel containing sand and particles of iron, attracts the particles of iron but does not attract the sand ; so the faculties of a man's mind appropriate certain facts and reject others. What is

evidence to a man will depend upon those of his faculties which are at work upon the things which are presented as evidence.

When, then, men say to me, "I am not responsible for my belief," I say to them, "Yes, you are;" and when, on the other hand, men say to me, "You are responsible for just what you believe," I say, "No, I am not;" and I am right both when I affirm and when I deny. In certain respects I am responsible, and in certain other respects I am not responsible. When a man presents to me a truth in mathematics, with all manner of formulas, the more he demonstrates it, the more I am in a cloud. It is clear as crystal to him, and it is murky as midnight to me. It does not find me. On the other hand, when a man brings to me the elements of a truth which depends largely upon sympathy with that which is in nature, I have an intuition as quick as a flash of lightning. No reasoning is required to enable me to comprehend it. But if I make the same statement to another man who has no such intuition, he will look blank at it. That which I felt quiveringly, to the very core, I cannot make him understand.

Take an example in another relation, which is perhaps more familiar to your observation. A quiet remark is made at some convivial entertainment, and you feel it. The faculty of mirth is excited in you, and you shake with laughter. Right by your side is one who heard precisely the same thing—a most decorous and excellent man; and he says, "Explain it to me: I do not perceive it, sir." You explain it, and he says, "Well, I presume it is, sir, as you say, but I do not yet perceive it." It is not his fault that the sense of humor is lacking in his nature; but truths of humor cannot present themselves to him as they do to you or to me.

The Scriptures make the test of believing to lie in the life and in the disposition. They nowhere require men, as the condition of acceptance and salvation, to be technically and philosophically right on all points of belief; but they do require that a man, in the presence of truth, using it as he pleases, selecting it according to the analysis and attractions and repulsions of his own nature, should live right. They hold men accountable for the development of their manhood on the pattern of Christ Jesus. They say, "Here are the truths of God; sort them, use them, every man according to his own liberty, in the spirit, and not in the letter." You are called to liberty; but it is that every one of you may become men in Christ Jesus. Men are held accountable for manhood, but not for the way in which they use the instruments by which the manhood is produced.

It is with the mind as it is with the body, in this respect. The

physician says to a household, "Here is the great realm of food. Eat that which agrees with you. The same kinds of food do not agree with all people. If you grow healthy on the food that I loathe, that is the food for you, although it disagrees with me; and if I grow healthy on the food that you loathe, that is the food for me, although it disagrees with you." And it is very much so in the matter of believing. All cannot believe the same things, or cannot believe things in the same way.

"But," say men, "believing amounts to nothing if one man may believe one thing, and another man another thing." Well, let me ask, then, Is it not possible for truth to be so large that ten men shall believe it differently, and yet each one of them so sectionally and personally believe it, that they shall all be true though none of them has more than partial truth, and that all ten of them shall compass the whole truth?

I look at a large tree on the lawn, and say to my neighbor, "What is that tree to you?" He looks at it, and says, "Well, I think that would cut about twenty cords of wood. You could work in a good many branches, and as the price of wood is in the market I think I could make fifty dollars out of that tree, easily, and perhaps more than that." His answer shows what the tree is to him—and it *is* that. I call up a boy, and say to him, "What do you think of when you look at that tree?" "Ah!" he says, "there will be a bushel of hickory-nuts on that tree, anyhow;" and he begins to think how he will climb it, and shake them down, and what he will do with them. That is what the tree says to him. I say to another person, "What is that tree to you?" He says, "I would not take fifty dollars for it. Under it my cows stand in summer. The shade of that tree has stood me in stead of a shed ever since I owned this farm. That tree is worth its weight in gold." He values it for its economic uses. I ask a painter, "What is that tree to you?" At once he says, "Do you see what an exquisite form it has? How picturesque it is? If you were to take it and put it in the foreground of the landscape that I am working on, what a magnificent effect you would get!" It has an æsthetic value to him. I ask another man, "What is it to you?" He goes into an explanation of its structure and qualities. He is a botanist, and he has his peculiar view of it. I ask myself, "What is that tree?" It is everything. It is God's voice, when the winds are abroad. It is God's thought, when in the deep stillness of the noon it is silent. It is the house which God has built for a thousand birds. It is a harbor of comfort to weary men and to the cattle of the field. It is that which has in it the record of ages. There it has stood for a

century. The winter could not kill it, and the summer could not destroy it. It is full of beauty and strength. It has in it all these things ; and as different men look at it, each looks at so much of it as he needs ; but it takes ten men to see everything that there is in that tree—and they all do not half see it.

So it is with truths. Men sort them. They bring different faculties to bear in considering them. One person has philosophical reason ; another has factual reason. One man brings one part of his mind to it ; another brings to it another part of his mind. The truth is larger than any one man's thought of it. The truth of God usually has relations that stretch out in such a way that men may see it very differently, and all of them be true in spots, although they do not have the whole truth.

The importance of belief is transcendent, therefore ; and yet it may be entirely consistent with the ideas which I have been enunciating. Truth may be very different in its impressions on different minds ; and yet the grand central verity towers up above men. It is important, not that men should believe just alike in every shade and color, but that men should believe clearly, definitely, and accurately, and bring fidelity to their beliefs. Believing is a matter of great importance in every way. No doctrine of believing can be more emasculating than that which allows men to take things as they come along, now siding with this school, now with that, and now with another.

"Manhood is the main thing," men say. It is true, manhood is the main thing ; but suppose I say to a person, "Which direction shall I take to go to the city forty miles distant ?" and he replies, "It does not so much matter, my friend, about the road, so that you get there." I know that ; but I think the getting there will have a relation to the swamps and hills and various obstructions between here and there. The question is, "What road is the most likely to get me there the easiest, and in the least time ?"

Now, manhood is the thing ; and if it exists you have no right to question what method it came by : but if you are seeking, by the light of experience, the most probable way of educating manhood, then it is of great importance what way you take to accomplish it.

In the material world, nobody believes respecting scientific facts as men allow themselves to believe in regard to theological truths. What we believe determines what we do. A man says, "I am a true man, and I do not believe in your scientific truths." Do not you believe in the abstract doctrine of gravitation ? Do not you believe there is such a thing as attraction of gravitation ? He does : if he did not, he never would go down stairs except with one

step. If he did not, he never would rear children in the vicinity of precipices or ledges. You believe in the doctrine of light and electricity. There are many scientific truths and facts which men must believe in as the substratum of government, in order to preserve their lives and use their bodies. Nowhere else more than in the realm of the senses do men recognize the importance of believing right, and accurately. Suppose a man who was building an engine, should say, "What is the use of believing just so about every part of this engine? A man ought to be liberal in mechanics"! I think he would find, when he came to put his engine together, that his liberty did not amount to much. Suppose you should go to a drug-store for a prescription, with the feeling that a little more of this or a little more of that would not make much difference, and you should say to the apothecary, "Be liberal with your drugs!" Does it not make some difference, when a man is going for medicine, whether he has more or less of the different ingredients? We understand very well that in dealing with physical elements believing is important; and not only believing, but accurate believing.

Now, is believing important in matter, and not important in that which is higher than matter—mind?

Men believe in regard to ethics. They believe themselves to be accountable in regard to right and wrong. There are certain absolute qualities infused into things by the creative God. Uses determine right and wrong; and the results, reaching backward, prove some things to be good, and some to be bad. All schools agree in this: that there are certain things right and certain things wrong, and that it is important that men should know the one and the other, and that they should be accurate in their knowledge.

It is not important for my daily life that I should know whether or not property is an element which has the divine sanction; it is not important that I should know whether or not the sacredness of property arises from that which is given to it by legislation; but it is important that I should know the difference between my pocket and my neighbor's. It is not important that I should know how to manufacture paper; but it is important that I should know what paper I sign my name to. Although the grounds of ethics may give rise to infinite schools and infinite divisions among men, it is your business to know what is right, and to do it.

In every shop, on every ship, in every store, in every relation, there are certain great elements of right and wrong which every man is accountable for; and if he does not do right he cannot plead ignorance. To be ignorant in these things is to be guilty of crime. And is that so in the lower realm of life, and not so in the higher realm of manhood?

Every man is held accountable for a right knowledge of commercial law, and for a right practice of it, if he be in commerce. Every man in political life is held accountable, not for believing as it may happen, but for believing right.

Now, in moral and religious life, the same reasons which obtain in all other correlated circumstances obtain with even greater force. It is a matter of transcendent importance whether there is a God or whether there is not; and it is a matter of prodigious importance whether you believe one way or the other. Do not commit the mistake that is all the time being made, of saying, "There is a man, an atheist, who for twenty years past has not believed that there was a God; and where can you find a man that is more just, a kinder man, a better citizen? He is better than the average of Christians, if you judge by their conduct; and yet he is an atheist." Ah! you should recollect that when a man is born into Christian society, and brought up in a Christian household, so that all the periods of his life are indoctrinated by Christian ethics, the framework of his life runs up on the basis of Christian believing. Though he may not believe in Christianity intellectually, his manhood has been fashioned under Christian beliefs; and it is not fair to say that he is better than a Christian, being an atheist; for he is a product of a believing state of society. He was himself fashioned, directly or indirectly, by those very beliefs which now he rejects.

Is there nothing gained from believing in an overruling government, and in a personal God? Take that faith from society at large, and what would be the effect? I do not ask what here and there a single man, favored in his organization, well-balanced physically and morally, might be able to do without that faith; but take mankind, take society, take the average of men, and does it make no difference with their character, and conduct, and all that goes to make conduct in life, whether they feel that there is a God or not? Does it make no difference whether they believe in a malign or a benign Ruler of the universe? If they believe that God loves cruelty; that he puts blood to his lip as wine; that he is a hard master, reaping where he sowed not, and requiring where he gives no competence to fulfill; that he pushes weakness with rigorous sternness—if they believe these things, is it all the same as though they believed God to be loving, and kind, and lenient? Can a man fill heaven with a God of tyrannical nature and not have a reflection of that nature upon his own sentiments and feelings and conduct? Put into heaven a despot, and the earth will swarm with despots. Put there a Father with infinite truth and justice; put there a Being with equilibrium of faculty, but with goodness dominant and

pre-eminent, and the reflection of his attributes will be seen in the dispositions of men, in family intercourse, and in commercial jurisprudence. Earthly kings will do what they think heavenly kings do. If God has a tormenting machine, by which he punishes myriads of criminals, breaking them on the wheel; or if he has deep, dark, dank dungeons, where he immures men for infinite periods, why should not the inquisitorial scenes be revived, and why should there not be dungeons, under the direction of the imperial throne? But if cruelty is more cruel in God than in men, because he is so much greater than they are; if obligation in the direction of mercy and goodness is in the ratio of infinity; if there is no creature in the universe who is so bound to deal with men sympathetically and benevolently as God, then what a prodigious power comes upon the community from a belief in that fact! It makes a great deal of difference what sort of a God men believe in, as well as whether they believe in any God or not.

It makes a great deal of difference, too, whether men believe, in regard to themselves (I will not use the language of theology except so far as it is necessary to explain the various theories which are current) that they were born with a fallen nature. Men fell in Adam, and have been falling ever since. It is held, therefore, by certain schools in theology, that nothing which a man does in his natural state is good, and that in order to do anything good he must be absolutely changed by the grace of God. This is a very offensive way of stating it. It may be stated, however, in such a way as to be in consonance with the judgments and feelings of men. If men are born into this life without moral quality, it matters not whether they were cheated out of it in Adam, or whether their deprivation of it was a part of the method of creation. If a man is traveling, and he has no money, it does not matter whether he has not earned it, or whether it has been stolen from him. The main point is that he is without it, and is embarrassed. If men are born into life in such a state that either by one theory or another every one needs not simply growth, but conversion or change; if they need to subdue something in themselves, and to emancipate and change something as well; above all, if they need all the power that is in their own reason and will, and something more in the nature of divine inspiration; if they need in soul-culture what the flower needs in floral-culture—sunlight in the day time, with intervals of something else that comes by night; if they need that which corresponds to the summer air that calls the flower to work out its own beauty and salvation, not “with fear and trembling,” but with quivering fragrance—if men need these things, it

does not matter whether they were born at the bottom, or midway between the bottom and the top, they must go through a process of transformation. Manhood is wrought out ; it is the fruit of education ; it is the result of culture ; that inspiration which comes from the soul of God is necessary ; and it makes a great deal of difference whether a man believes one way or another about it.

A man says, " My boys are of good stock, and if I throw them into the world they will come out right." He does throw them into the world, and they go to no school, they learn no trade, they are not taught how to subdue their dispositions, they have no culture, nor help, nor anything ; and they may rise ; but it will be apt to be with the halter !

Another man says, " My children are born into life, babes. They know nothing. I must see that they learn something." They are disproportioned in their natures. The mother and the father are mixed up in them unequally. Pride in them must be kept down. The love of praise must be restrained. Conscience must be intoned. This child must have its spiritual elements developed. That child must be unfolded in some other direction.

It is of great importance whether men believe in the universal moral government of God. It is of great importance whether they have worked up that dormant spiritual nature which has been planted in them. If they believe one way, their belief leads to right culture and manhood ; if they believe the other way, it leads to the reverse.

It is of great importance whether a man thinks human nature needs change or not. Some men say that a man must be born again ; that he must have the night of conviction come down upon him so that he shall feel that he is lost ; that by-and-by, after wallowing in the regions of despair, he must come out of the night into the morning, where the Sun of Righteousness shall rise upon him with healing in his beams ; and that then he must sing as choiring birds do, with a consciousness that he is a child of God. When this has taken place, he is supposed to have given evidence of conversion. But this is a poetic and dramatic statement of an experience which may be true in a much more humble form, and with greatly reduced proportions. If a man is so convicted and so converted, that is all right ; I would not take down one banner, nor withdraw one element from the fact ; but if only they are transmuted who have gone through this form of experience, then ninety-nine in a hundred of those who are supposed to be Christians are not Christians ; for, I tell you, whatever men may say, the majority of them do not have this experience. They may think they

do ; they may work themselves into the belief that they do ; but they do not. Ninety-nine men in a hundred do not pass through any such night of conviction as many suppose to be necessary to a thorough conversion. A man hears others say, "I had an awful conviction ; I could not sleep ;" and he thinks he had an awful conviction too, because he lay awake a whole hour one night ! He hears others say, "Oh, such a dawn of glory as I had !" and he recollects a time when he had a glorious feeling ; and he recognizes it, and brings it up to what he considers the regulation pattern, and tells the committee that he has been rightly converted, and they take him into the church.

All these variations of statement do not invalidate the facts. You may work it and turn it as much as you please, but it still remains. It is true that every man comes to a point in life in which he needs the transforming power of the Spirit of God in his soul ; in which he needs moral change ; in which he needs divine inspiration and training. Does he believe it ? If he does, then his belief will work one line of conduct ; if he does not, his non-belief will work another line of conduct. If he disbelieves it, and yet lives as though he believed it, then the question is whether the indirect influences of the community are not producing upon him in some measure the effect which believing might be expected to produce.

The same is true in respect to the whole of moral character. It is a matter of supreme importance whether a man believes the great ideal of character to be, "Look every man on his own things, and not on the things of another," or whether he believes that ideal to be, "Look every man on the things of another, and not on his own things alone." "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law ;" "Let every man look after No. 1:" here are two distinct ways of stating the theory of life. Does it make no difference which road a man takes ? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart ;" "There is no God." Does it make no difference which of these two faiths a man adopts ? "Love thy neighbor as thyself ;" "Take care of yourself ; nobody else will take care of you." Here are two creeds, that of selfishness, and that of benevolence. Does it make no difference which you accept ? Do you say, "Right believing is not of so much matter as right living ?" How is a man going to live right if he does not believe right ! A man without a belief is like a bird without a tail. A bird's tail-feathers are for him to steer by ; and if he has no tail he cannot steer himself. Belief is a man's rudder, and he who has no belief is all at sea. A man without a belief is like a mechanic without any knowledge of mechanics, or a merchant without any knowledge of those

manners and customs which regulate a merchant's affairs. In any sphere of life, is a man likely to be symmetrical and strong in the ratio of his ignorance, or in the ratio of his precise knowledge?

Now, I tell you that in religious matters it is in the ratio of right-knowing that a man is likely to be a right-minded man. The knowledge does not need to be of an abstract form; practical knowing may take the place of philosophical knowing; but to think, to think rightly, to think sharply and definitely, and to link thoughts with each other is indispensable. Right-thinking, sedulously carried forward to mark out the path of life and character, is important. And he who teaches the young that they must scorn the idea of precise beliefs, and that the better way is to come up generally is a traitor to the young. Every school, every academy, every college, every university, every department in them, is a protest against this notion of mere loose, vague, indifferent thinking. Object to this system if you please; object to that system if you please; object to abstract forms if you please; make as many criticisms about proportions as you please; but the great fact that men need to believe accurately, and that their beliefs are the foundations on which they build, is of transcendent importance.

These views are not less true or important because, on the other hand, carried to excess, and injudiciously enforced, they are mischievous. Men are drawn to religion, often, by personal influence, it is said. What is personal influence? "Why it is my father and mother; it is the aunt that reared me; it is the kind guardian that had my early confidence; and I do not remember ever to have been much taught in the church or in the catechism. I do not know that I have anything more than a general religious conviction. The reason I have lived as I have is that I have been brought up by such and such persons. Their influence kept down the bad and developed the good in me." And it is said, "What is the use of belief, if men are just as good without it as with it?" Men are not as good without it as with it, unless they have received the benefit of it through others. There is a garden of belief from which many get the fruit of believing who do not themselves believe. I do not bear the apples that I eat. The tree bears them for me. And there are people who believe, under the indirect influence of whose believing you come. Would you argue, when Peter went through the street, and people brought their sick and laid them down where his shadow might fall on them and heal them, that his shadow was not his body? How could there be a shadow if there was not a body to cast it? And if the shadow was efficacious, how much more efficacious may we suppose that the touch of the

hand, vital with power, would be ! In Christian life, those that go before cast a shadow, as it were, and we bring our children forth, in order that this shadow may heal them. By the influence of those that go before—of guardians and fathers and mothers—we are led from evil and toward good ; we are brought into sympathy with social life around us ; we are drawn to each other. If those with whom we associate are higher than we, we are carried upward by them ; if they are on a level with us, we simply fortify what we have ; if they are below us, we are attracted downward. He that keeps better company than himself rises higher ; he that keeps company no better than he is, stands still ; he that keeps worse company than himself sinks lower. Many are drawn into Christian life by the influence of those with whom they associate. Many a man has testified, “It was the godly example of my wife that subdued my nature, and brought me into this state of mind ; and I ask the church to let me in, that I may have help to live a better life.” He says, “I do not know much about theology ; I do not know much about the plan of restoration or the plan of atonement ; I do not know much about the Trinity, or the relations of the three Persons in it ; I do not know much about the abstract doctrine of moral government ; I do not know much about special providence ; but I am satisfied that I am not living as I ought to. I am convinced that it is my duty to be a better man, and I believe the church can help me to be better. I want to belong to a Christian assembly, so that I may learn to pray and to praise ; and if this is the seat of praise and prayer, I beg that you will accept me.”

There are some instances in which men are brought into the Christian life without believing ; but they are instances in which those who brought them up and shaped their life and character were believers. It is the transmitted power of belief that saves them.

When there are young pigeons born, the old ones eat grain, and turn it to milk, and eject the milk into the mouths of the young ones, and they thrive. The young pigeons have no digestive power, so the old pigeons digest for them. There is many a man whose wife, or father, or mother, or friend, gathered spiritual food for him, and wrought it into experience and sympathy, and transmitted it to him ; and it is not fair to say that a man does as well without a belief as he would with one ; for he has the advantage which comes from the believing of those who are around him.

On every side we find men who are influenced in their religious life, not so much by any system of theology that they are acquainted with, or by any Church or belief that they know about, as by the

life and conversation of believers. For thousands of years the laws and customs, natural and social, have been fashioned by Christianity. We are to remember that there is a kind of reflex light of Christianity shining all through society. Even in the store, in the shop, in commercial life, there is a large element of Christian truth; and men who have never read the Bible, who have never heard a sermon, who do not understand systematic theology at all, are Christians. They are brought up to the sphere of Christian living by a reflex Christian influence that shines upon them from the manners and customs of society.

If, besides these indirect influences, one has also clear personal knowledge and definite faith, it is all the better; but even without personal knowledge and definite faith, there may be such a thing as vicarious knowledge. As a mother thinks for the child, and brings it up virtuously; as the father takes the son and brings him up wisely; as through life the older live for the younger; so the belief of some in religious matters redounds to the salvation of others who do not believe. The vicarious influence of man on man represents the truth of God. You may understand the systems of theology and be better for it; or, you may not know anything about systems of theology, and yet receive the influence of those systems through the living personality of others.

A man brought into the Christian state and disposition by the irradiation of good-will and love may bring forth the fruit of good-will and love. It is true that he is a good man; but it is also true that his goodness is the fruit of definite truths and beliefs that have come to him through others, who have used their influence to fashion and train the true Christian character in him.

Lastly, the largest manhood requires the union of both the thoughts, the recognition, and the volition of men. While that which comes in any direction from the sympathy and co-operative influences of the household is the largest conception of a true Christian manhood, the Gospel, blessed be God, has made provision for all forms of manhood from the very highest and largest pattern down to the very lowest and least. Christ came to save the world to the uttermost. He came to take in the noblest that need him; and the lowest are not beneath his notice.

When, therefore, a man is living right in his inward life; when his soul is turned reverentially towards God; when he shows that his dispositions are just and loving towards man, he is a Christian. Though he be blind as to Scripture history, and as to the great doctrines of Christianity, the manhood in him, the life begun and flashing in him, determines that he is a Christian. Though he

is not a Christian of the largest pattern, he is to be received, "not to doubtful disputations" and fears and tremblings.

If one says to me, "Suppose a man does not believe in the inspiration of the Bible?" I reply, That word is a fog. There are twenty inspirations almost—or theories, in regard to it: which of them do you mean? "Suppose a man says that the Bible is just like any other book, would you take him into the Church?" That would depend very much on whether I thought God had received him into his personal confidence. If I thought he had, I would, on just the ground that Peter took when he said, "Forasmuch as God gave [the Gentiles] the like gift that he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I should withstand God?" "But suppose a man does not believe in the Trinity, would you receive him into the fellowship of the Church?" It would depend upon whether he gave evidence of being a Christian or not. "Suppose a man believes in that abominable necromancy run mad—that miserable, daft, insane thing, the Athanasian Creed; and suppose, believing in it, he is as proud and selfish and jealous as he can be; and suppose he desires to join the Church, would you receive him?" No, I would not, because the spirit of Christ is not in him. A man comes, and says, "I do not know anything about the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; I am ignorant of the three Persons in the Godhead: the theory concerning them may be true, but I do not know anything about them." What *do* you know? "Well, I know that I am very weak and very sinful; I know that I have been waked up to a profound conviction of my weakness and sinfulness; I know that I earnestly every day try to please God; and I believe that the way to please him is to do good to my fellow-men, and to be obedient to his will." Would you receive such a man into the Church? I would. I would not receive him as a pattern of Christianity; I would not receive him as one who had attained all that was needful; but I would receive him, and would give him all the advantages of church organization, in order that he might attain to a larger and deeper knowledge. "Why not instruct him first, and then take him in?" Well, for the same reason that I would not wait for a foundling to prove itself to be able to live without my help, before I took it in. If a babe were left at your door, would you say, "Well, let him stay out there twenty-four hours, and if he lives, perhaps I will take him in?" and if at the end of the twenty-four hours he was not dead, would you say, "Let him alone, and if he stands it a week longer, I will take him in?" I would take him in at once, in order to give him a chance to live. And if a man has a germinal

point of Christian life, I would take him into the Church, because he, of all others, needs to be taken in.

If I take a fireman's blazing torch and rush through the street with it, you cannot very well blow it out; but if people talked in the same way about this as they do about receiving men as Christians, they would say, "Carry it into the house." If a man is strong and able to walk alone in the Christian life, people are in favor of getting him into the Church. But here comes a poor woman who wants to steal across the dark street for the doctor, and she has lighted her little candle, and the wind is out, and the flame quivers, and people say, "Do not take that in yet. Let it alone, let the wind blow upon it, and if it burns well that will be evidence that it is genuine, and ought to be taken in, while if it goes out that will be evidence that it is not genuine, and ought not to be taken in." If a man is struggling to overcome his sins, people want to let him struggle until he conquers or fails, and if he conquers, they take him into the Church; if he fails, they say that he is not fit to be in the Church. But God says, "A bruised reed I will not break, and the smoking flax I will not quench till it bring forth judgment unto victory."

If a man has a right germ in him, take him into the communion of God's people. Take him in, not because he has gone as far as he ought to go, in soul-culture, but because he needs nourishing.

Have I succeeded in doing two things? Have I succeeded in showing that it is a matter of great importance that knowledge should prevail, that it should be accurate, that the higher forms of manhood require it, and that it is required in moral life more than in æsthetical, ethical, or mechanical life? And, on the other hand, have I succeeded in making you understand (what may seem anomalous), that it is quite possible for a man to be devoid of knowledge, and yet receive from indirect influences of life, the Church itself included, such dispositions and tendencies that he may be called a Christian—and that in such case you are not to question his orthodoxy, though he be not orthodox in the head?

"**Him** that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."

In these times when so much skepticism is abroad, and when there is so much questioning, a minister of the Gospel stands in a very peculiar, critical and difficult position. I love truth; I love new truth; I love the whole truth. When that day comes that I shall denounce honest searchers after truth in the fields of science or philosophy, may my hand forget its cunning, and my tongue cleave

to the roof of my mouth! To every honest man that is seeking a wider sphere in matter, whatever changes may be compelled by the retroactive influence of truth and large methods of investigation, I bid Godspeed. If searchers be honest and large-minded, my heart goes with them. And yet, I stand where I am obliged to preach the truth for training purposes; for purposes of moral culture; and when I see men growing heedless, in their love of material truth, and despising that other great realm of truth which includes the spiritual and inward life, I am obliged to stand between these two spheres, and say, "That is science falsely so-called which ignores this higher realm, while that system is incomplete which leaves out the lower one." The facts of nature are not all facts of matter. There is consciousness as well as phenomenon. Thoughts and emotions and dispositions are not only a part, but the blossom and fruit of nature; and science will have her chief temple and final reign when she establishes herself in the souls of men, and not simply on the terraqueous globe.

I say, then, to all men who seek to know the methods of God in creation, Godspeed you! Remember that the value of knowledge consists in the manhood which it can build in you. Build your foundations on knowledge. By the grace of God, with the help of the divine Spirit, it can build you up into everlasting life. And do not stand paltering, and saying, "How little can I get along with? There is one sphere where poverty is to be despised, and that is the sphere of spiritual things. Be rich in the knowledge of things true, and right, and virtuous, and beautiful. Live for a larger manhood. Live for a long life—so long that the earth cannot contain it, that it may betake itself to the immortalities of God.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

KNOWN to thee already, our Father, are our wants. We do not draw near to thee to make them known, nor to remind thee of things forgotten; but, with confidence of love, with sympathy, we draw near to thee, that our souls may be refreshed in thy presence, and that we may take hold of all the bounties that have come, or are coming, upon us, as gifts of God, that we may be sensible that we receive them from thee, and that in that thought we may find more satisfaction in our blessings than we could if we took them as results of our own skill, or in forgetfulness or selfishness. Grant us that spirit, that inshining light, that inspiration, by which we are made to feel our relations to thee. Deliver us, this morning, from doubt, from all things that repel; and draw us near to thee by all those encouragements which comfort the soul, and which strengthen our faith, our hope, and our fidelity to thee. We confess our sinfulness, and we beseech of thee, day by day, to

forgive our sins and infirmities, and everything in us which offends. Give us clearer light, not only, but grace to walk in that light when it shines upon our path. By strife may victory come; and by victory, hope and full assurance of faith. And we pray that thou wilt deliver each one in thy presence from the trial and temptation incident to his special case. Thou knowest each one's want and need, and thou canst grant to every one that which he needs. We pray that thou wilt make the strength great where the burden is heavy. May the light be strong and abiding where the darkness is dense. May thy presence be very near, in all-sweet personality, to those who are afflicted with doubt, and who cry out unto thee, and hear no answer. We pray that thou wilt draw near to those that are in the midst of cares, cutting themselves, and gashing themselves. Deliver them, we pray thee, by enabling them to put their trust in thee. May they know how to avail themselves of thy watch, of thine oversight, of thy strength. We rejoice in thy providence. We pray that every one may have a consciousness that God thinks of him and overrules all things for his good. May our strength be, not in our own wisdom, nor in our own skill, but in the thought of God, and in the power of God, manifested toward us. We pray that thou wilt grant unto all those who desire it a more intimate knowledge of thee. Open the hearts of all, that the light of the truth which shines in the face of Christ may become their light—the day of their soul.

We pray that if there be those who are wandering from thy presence, they may be brought back again to the nobleness and comfortableness of Christian life.

We pray for the young, that they may begin, in the morning of life, to lay the foundation of that manhood which shall stand approved in thy sight, now, and in all the trials of life, and in the great test-hour of death. May it never seem too early for any to be manly. May it never seem too soon for any to take the life and character of Christ Jesus for their example.

We pray that the sweetness of thy presence, and the light and joy which spring from thy heart, may be the portion of every one.

Bless, we pray thee, all who this day shall preach the Gospel of Christ. May the truth be more and more powerful and precious to those who teach, and more and more fruitful in those who listen.

Spread abroad, we pray thee, the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. May all the waste places in our land be visited. May thy truth everywhere be made known, and may it become the stability of our times.

Bless all schools, and academies, and colleges, and every seminary of learning. We pray that they may be purified, and consecrated to the work of God among men.

We pray for all churches, of every denomination. We thank thee for those things which make for unity; for more and more perfect confidence among thy disciples. Deliver men, we beseech of thee, from envy and jealousy, and from all forms of irritable controversy.

We pray that the truth may grow, and that the light of it may bring forth fruit. We pray for that truth which shall set men free from bad passions, and evil customs, and corrupt laws and institutions. We pray that those things which produce manhood may grow, and that all those things which tend to oppress men may be cast down. May superstitions cease. May pure and undefiled religion come in every heart. And may that blessed day at last dawn in which the whole world shall see thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praises evermore.
Amen.

THE MERCIFULNESS OF THE BIBLE.

“The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.”—
Psalm cxix. 64.

The statutes meant here, and so often in this long psalm, are evidently the sacred writings then existing, which purported to interpret the laws and commands of God. You will observe, not alone in this 64th verse, which I have read, but all the way through this 119th Psalm, and throughout all the Psalms, the intimate connection which existed between sacred Scripture and the natural world, or material globe.

In some sense, the Old Testament may be called a book of intense enthusiasm (using that expression in the modern philosophic sense). It has an eye to the phenomena of nature, and to their economic and moral uses. It is a book that constantly goes out of itself, as it were, into its surroundings; and it is significantly called *a light*.

Now, no man lights a lamp for the sake of seeing the lamp. We should think him a singular student who, lighting his lamp, should occupy himself in unscrewing it, and peeping in to see what was in it; with tinkering at the wick; with working at the shade; with taking it up and setting it down; with defending it from millers—thus devoting himself wholly to the lamp. On the contrary, he forgets it. He takes it, to read by it something that is not a lamp. It is the book, it is the picture, it is the room, it is the child, it is the friend, it is the life which is going on, that the light reveals. It reveals the nature that is outside of it; and its value consists in its giving a true interpretation.

The Psalmist says:

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

What he means by that, it is easy to discern, when we see how the light of the Word—the Old Testament Scripture—judges of the affairs of nations; of the beauties of the heavens and of the earth;

of the processes of the seasons; of the methods of divine providence towards animals and towards men. He is in living, vital sympathy with life everywhere in the great world outside of him; and he takes the Bible, as a man would take a lamp into a room to see what was in it. For, in those old times, they did not shut God up so close as we do. He lived outside of the Church, and all things were his, and his providence extended over all creation, and his Word was the interpretation thereof. It was the interpretation of science, and of all those elements out of which science springs.

The particular passage which I have selected, I have chosen for the sake of the one word, *mercy*, that is in it.

“The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes.”

The implication is that the earth is interpreted by God’s statutes. It is as if David had said, “The world, with its affairs, its processes, as I now see them in the light of thy Word, is full of thy mercy.”

You will have noticed (for I read a portion of this chapter in the preliminary service) how constantly he goes back to the knowledge of the statutes—the Word. How beautiful they are! How strong they are! What a refuge they are! How comforting they are! How sweet they are!

I hear some people still talk in that way about the Bible. I still hear some people talk about the mercifulness of the Bible—the subject that I am going to speak upon this morning. I hear some people still talking about the Bible in the light of its comfort and sweetness and beauty. But I think the number is diminishing. I think there is a great deal more of fighting for the Bible than there is of using it. There are a great many more persons anxious about the inspiration of the Bible than there are about the spirit that is in it. There are a great many more zealous for the maintenance of the Book than there are for its daily comforting use. It is the one book that I think the world cannot afford to lose. And it crowds out no other. It gives value to all books that tend toward the truth. It is in affinity with everything that is bright and beautiful in the Church, and out of the Church, and throughout all creation. The Word of God is a kind of atmosphere in which all things exist, and which throws a light upon all things that are, or are to be; and it is the one book which we cannot afford to lose out of the treasures of human life.

And yet, it is very much lost out, if by *losing* you mean, not the annihilation of the book, but the not using it, or the unwise use of it. When it has been used, in the majority of cases it has been used in a wrong spirit, and for purposes which it did not at all con-

template; so that it has become repugnant to men, and is permitted to lie quietly aside. There are many persons who, when they become pious, think it to be their duty to read the Bible; and they read it, not because they enjoy it particularly, but because they feel that they ought to, according to the regulation practice.

A man is a Christian. What does that mean? Well, that he has joined the church, and keeps Sunday (and keeping Sunday means that he should not ride out, nor write business letters, but go to church, and sleep as comfortably as he can), behaves himself everywhere with method, and without much outbreak, reads a chapter in the Bible every morning at family prayers, and attends certain meetings through the week.

Now and then I find a man who makes the Bible a companion. Once in a while I come across a person who is lonesome without it. If you go down from people who are intelligent and cultured and prospered in worldly things, to those who are poor, and bear yokes and troubles, you will find that the Bible is more and more used. People low down in life, and unfortunate in their affairs, if they are virtuous and moral, find some comfort, they do not know why, in reading the Bible. People in distress, people living alone, people with whom the world is going very hard, often find much in the Bible that parallels their experience, in the words of the old Psalmist, and they say, "If it had not been for the strength that I got from the Word of God, I do not know how I should have struggled through;" but that, I fear, is not the prevalent use of the Bible, or the spirit in which men look at it. It has been very largely employed for destructive purposes. Its texts have been wrested from their true meaning. I sometimes think it is like a forest, which is most beautiful for abode, most attractive to the eye, most delightful to all the senses, but into which men go with axes, hewing down boughs and trunks, and squaring them, and building them into houses, and even forts; so that although they have houses and forts, they no longer have any forest, because the trees have been hewn down, and squared to the rule and measure, until the grace and beauty and freedom of life which belongs to their nature is gone.

I have preached several sermons lately on the subject of the Bible; and I purpose to dwell a little, this morning, on one particular quality of the Word of God—its mercifulness. The genius of the Scriptures is mercifulness. I am not speaking of the spirit which it inculcates in you and me. What I wish to emphasize is, that the Bible has been constructed in such a way that it is an armory of mercy—a magazine of kindness. It is a great institution of mercifulness.

The first point I make, is the mercifulness of its eminent secularity, united to tendencies towards eminent spirituality. If you read the treatises that have been drawn mostly from the Scriptures as to how to live right, how to lead an eminent Christian life, you will discern how very different is the genius of their structure from that of the Scriptures themselves; how they almost invariably pitch upon the higher moods of the mind the second, third and fourth degrees of development which have taken place in the understanding, and upon the distinctively religious emotions; and how, in order to meet any contrary sequence, the spiritual life is evolved too much on this higher, and, I might almost say, supernatural plane.

In the Word of God, you find no such structure of peculiarities. The Bible is a book of business, from beginning to end. It is a book in which a man, although his thoughts touch some of the pinnacles of the New Jerusalem, stands with his feet on the ground. Good, sound, homely earth is under every man's feet who walks through the Word of God. It is a book of this world, about this world, about the things which men think of in this world, and about the temptations which beset us in this world, from day to day.

The Old Testament, particularly, is a book whose construction has in view, all the way through, not exclusively, but primarily, the foundation of the higher development and of the happy condition of men in this world. The Old Testament is a book of farming. It is a book of political economy. It is a book full of maxims of thrift. It is a book whose sanctions turn on worldly prosperity or adversity, connecting the one and the other with godliness and with righteous living.

Take, for instance, the direction to the child, "Honor thy father and thy mother." Why? That it may please God? Undoubtedly he ought to do it for that reason; but that was not the reason that was given—"that it may be well with thee;" "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Natural duties, springing from natural affections, are inculcated on grounds of worldly advantage. We live in an age in which disinterestedness is interpreted in such a way that men think it is not right to do any great thing with any consideration of its earthly effect. Not so the Word of God. From the beginning all through, it recognizes that in this world the duties which belong to life must be done with a wise consideration of the effects produced on earth. The Bible, therefore, at the foundation, has a world-life.

I know of no such collection of wisdom in relation to the present

he, no such insight into motives and character, no discriminations so far-reaching and penetrating, as "The Proverbs," as they are called, "of Solomon"—which are mostly his. That little book alone is invaluable. Though I do not regard it as so high-toned or so spiritual as many passages of the New Testament Scriptures, yet, as a part of an organized whole, it is without a parallel. And a man who should take the Proverbs of Solomon in his vest pocket (for they may be carried there: they have been printed in a pretty little volume which can be carried in the vest pocket)—a man who should take these Proverbs, and make himself acquainted with them, would, I think, find more wisdom in them for daily life in the family, in the street, in the shop, on the ship, in the store, in the factory, than anywhere else. They may be carried with a man into his pleasure, into his business, into his politics, everywhere. You will find more homely, practical wisdom, bearing directly on everyday life, in that little book than in any other treatise that has ever come from the mind of man.

Nor is this all. Because, when you go on to the New Testament, the nature of the sanctions rises and becomes higher, it does not follow that the others fail. They continue secular sanctions: but something is added to them in the New Testament, without taking out of them at all the worldly effects of right-living. For we find in the New Testament such passages as this, covering the whole ground:

"Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Therefore, in the most glowing epistles, in almost every one of the immortal letters of the apostles, where the highest sentiments abound, where imagination and faith act their noblest parts, you shall find that the outcome is to show how to reduce elevated thoughts, spiritual emotions and knowledges, to a practical use in daily life. Be courteous, be industrious, be careful, are specifications that are made over and over again in the New Testament.

Now, this is because human life is God's grand ordinance of education. Human life contains within itself special schools. The Church is a school; and the various institutions connected with it are schools; but they are parts of universal society; and human society, with its industries, its ambitions, its domestic relations, its higher moral provisions—the sum total of human society—organized mankind—is the grand school in which men are developed. There is something developed in connection with every part of necessary duty in human society. The relation of industry, and profits, and economies, and civil affairs, runs through the Old Testament

and the New; and they have a direct relation to moral states as well.

Now, with such secular conditions, we must mark the fact that there have sprung up men who have given the world its deepest religious views, and its most intense moral impulses. Under the training of such Scriptures have come up men of the noblest stamp. The Old Testament, some say, is a book whose level is very low, and whose sanctions are all worldly, whose motive is policy rather than principle, and profit rather than disinterestedness, and whose structure was best adapted to the earlier periods of life and the lower forms of human society; and yet, under the influence and training of that book, and the institutions to which it has given rise, have sprung those very moral natures that have gone deepest and risen highest. The old Psalmist, the old prophets, the old Hebrew minds, which even the most skeptical writers of our day recognize as being to moral ideas what Greek life was to intellectual ideas, and what Roman life was to organized governmental ideas—these were men trained according to the teachings of the Old Testament. And if men say that the Bible is a mere book of policy, I say that men brought up under the influence of the Bible have developed the highest intellectual and moral dispositions, and are the leaven of the moral life of the world to-day.

This is not an accident. It is such a tempering of duty in secularity that it leads to moral culture, and that moral culture again deepens men's natures; and out of their deeper natures come profounder views of God; and men are competent to receive new light, and to develop that which is material and domestic and secular, as a condition of that unfolding of higher views which leads to the full blaze and glory of the spiritual life that is depicted in the New Testament.

The temporal and secular element of the Scriptures, therefore, tends to the growth of the great ideal of manhood. The whole system of secular life and duty, so employed as to bring out of it a higher spiritual life, is an eminent instance of great wisdom and mercifulness in dealing with a race that could not have been dealt with in any other way. And when, by and by, philosophy shall have shown that the human race develop, not downward from a perfect manhood, but upward from the lower rudiments of manhood, we may hope for better results. It is not necessary that we should suppose men to have come from the lower animal creation. When you take Agassiz' view, that men were created by an intelligent Mind, but at a low or seminal point, and that then they unfolded gradually to what they have become; when the world and the church

take that ground, the first feeling will be that it tends to destroy religion. It will destroy the misinterpretation and misunderstanding of religion, just so soon as men begin to admit that the human race has been developed from lower savage and barbarian conditions.

That is the divine method. It is the economy of the Old and New Testaments. It is the process of divine wisdom in visible creation. You will find that that which is apparent in God's outward government is also shown in the developments of the Old Testament Scriptures. They took man, as an emerging creature, from a lower stage, and adapted all their instructions to that lower stage, pressing him upward. Man, being sensuous, the Old Testament dealt with him sensuously; and man, being also social, it dealt with him socially. Under the old Mosaic system they ate, and danced, and laughed, and sang, for religious purposes. When that system was in vogue, the instrumentalities which were employed were adapted to the social line which men had reached, still pressing them upward. And as they rose to a higher economic condition, so their views and institutions began to take a wider sweep, until, in the fullness of time, the light broke out completely, and man stood divulged as a spiritual being, riding on an animal body, but with full light and glory and immortality, as it came out in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The facts of human development will be found paralleled by precisely analogical facts contained in the Old Testament; and instead of these views throwing out the Word of God, they are going to corroborate it, and make it more and more apparently divine and wise.

Next, I mention the mercifulness of Scripture in using the highest ideal of life in such a manner as not to oppress the great mass of mankind. There is no despotism so little suspected, none so real, and I think none so cruel, as the despotism of the ideal. The glory and benefit of man consist in his capacity to have an ideal—that is to say, a perception of perfection in any direction to which he gives his mind. What we mean by *an ideal* is a fact, or a career, or an enterprise, or an object, or a character—anything which a man thinks of, carried up to a condition in which it will be perfect as contrasted with what it is now.

I go into the wood, and find the sloe—a miserable bitter plum; and I say to myself, “By successive sowings of the seeds of this fruit of the wilderness, and by successive selections for planting of the seeds of those trees which are the most vigorous, and of which the leaves are the most succulent, I shall get something better than the sloe. I see in my mind a luscious plum. That is my ideal.” Accordingly, I take seeds of the sloe, and plant them; and I pick

out seeds of the best trees which *they* produce, and plant them ; and I take seeds from the best trees which *they* produce, and plant them ; and so on, having in my mind the Bolivar plum, or the Washington plum, or some other fine fruit ; and I am working from the miserable sloe of the forest up toward this ideal. It is a perfect plum that I have in my mind ; and I am approaching it.

A man takes a dog-rose of the wood, and says to himself, "I can imagine that this rose might be so perfected, that it might be so enlarged, that its petals might be so multiplied and so packed one on the other, as to form a shell or cup ; and I can imagine that it might be made to possess an exquisite and delightful fragrance." He has in his mind the picture of a rose to which this rude flower might be brought by successive cultures, sowing and selecting, sowing and selecting, until perfection was reached. And he commences and carries on this process in his mind until he has Hebe's cup, or some other of the most beautiful of roses. The ideal is perfect, that hangs in the man's conception.

Now, men have some such ideals in regard to their own progress. Their ambition is to have a better house, and a better life. Men bear suffering and sorrow for the sake of living in ampler circumstances. We are seeking for the realization of an ideal of national life, of family life, and of individual life. We are in transit toward that ideal. The whole world is aiming at it. We are not given to Asiatic contentment. We are not satisfied with things as they are. The maxim, that if the father was a miller the son will be a miller, is not suited to the spirit of our times. It is not true that if the father lived in a miserable one-room hut the son should have no aspiration, for anything better.

A man born and bred on the New England hills lives in a little insignificant house which was once red, but from which the color has been well-nigh washed by winter and summer storms. For twenty years he has lived and slept in one inconvenient room. A child is born in that house ; and as soon as he comes to years of discretion, he says to himself, "I am going out into life to make my fortune." He has no idea of what a man's fortune is, but he has an impulse to do something by which he may become stronger, and larger, and wiser, and richer, and more potential, than his father has been. It is a sense of aspiration that is moving him. And so there are ideals, conceptions, perceptions, along the various lines of human development, physical, social, political, and religious.

This ideal is the glory of the world. It is the morning-star that tempts men on. Without it, the race stagnates, and the world is a pestilent, miasmatic swamp ; but with it, the world is perpetually

growing purer, and the race is aspiring to new forms, and higher levels, and nobler accomplishments.

So then, the ideal is a thing for which we are to be thankful; and yet it is one of those instruments of oppression which has brought almost as much torment into the world as the Inquisition itself ever did. Let us look at it.

For instance, one of the ways in which the ideal afflicts men is that which is seen when conceptions of life and character develop themselves. The most favored in the world catch quickest the inspiration of an ideal, and the less favored are longer in catching it, or do not catch it at all.

When the sun rises in Switzerland, the highest points of the mountains take its rays first—two or three hours before they reach the valleys below. So ideals are taken by the highest natures first. If they reflected the ideals as the mountains reflect the light of the sun, it would be all right. If, as the peasant, far down in the valley, is cheered by the sunlight, not because it strikes him, but because he sees it away up yonder, men of the lowest natures were encouraged by the ideals which they see reflected from men of the highest natures, then those ideals would be generally beneficial. But, ordinarily, men who have better ideas of philosophy and right living unite themselves by affinity, and separate themselves from their fellow-men, that they may enjoy the luxury of their refinement and culture; and they become, as it were, monopolists, and look down from their elevation with a sort of un pitying and hard contempt upon those who are below them. As men rise in life, and conceive higher ideals of living, they are apt to segregate together at the top of society, and cover it over with a luminous crust, and leave all who are beneath them unilluminated, unhelped, unsympathized with.

By-the-by, I may say that this exclusive use of the ideal drew out from Christ the bitterest denunciations he ever uttered. He did not denounce the harlot and the thief; they did not need denunciation; the universal conscience denounced them: but the men of eminent culture, the men of great property, the men who had received the highest ideals of civic, social, and philosophic life, who segregated themselves, and refused to sympathize with men below them, and oppressed them, and put burdens upon them—these men Christ denounced. He denounced the selfishness of culture as less excusable and more guilty than that of lust or passion.

But that is not all, nor half. Not only does the ideal, being received, lead men to segregate themselves into exclusive classes that intercept the light rather than transmit it to those below them, but it leads them to frame it into a rule of life so high and rigorous that not one man in a million can reach it.

Consider what is the effect in a school of putting a dull boy, a boy conscientious and earnest, but slow-moulded and slow-minded, into a class all the members of which are far beyond him, the class going on easily, and he taxing himself to the utmost, but still hanging behind, goaded or dragged, and in either case oppressed and wronged. Two hounds well mated can run together all day ; but suppose, instead of putting two hounds together, you should put together a goat and a hound, to run all day. The goat might keep up with the hound, but it would wear him out. Who ever drove a pair of horses that he did not find one less fast than the other ; that he did not find one dull and the other bright ; that he did not find it necessary to keep touching the dull one as if he were in fault for that which was no fault of his ; that he did not find that the bright horse did without urging what he had continually to urge the other to do ?

In life, you may make it a rule that what is facile to men of genius becomes fatal to men who are without genius. If you set an example of living before men which is easy to those who are largely cultured and fully developed, it becomes impossible to men who are in the very opposite condition. You must make your ideal the same to all men ; but somewhere or other there must be elasticity. That ideal must be followed by each grade, according to their ability to follow it, and not according to the ability of those who are above them.

Take, for instance, the first systematic and universal development which was made of religious truth ; which was false in many respects on account of its combinations, and on account of the dynamism or emphasis which it gave to the different divine attributes. It represented the governmental element of God, and the whole universe as his lawful prey. Nevertheless, it exalted the moral nature, it exalted conscience, it exalted the sense of obligation to God ; and it made righteousness terribly glorious, while it made sin fearfully dangerous. It presented an ideal that, meeting the mass of mankind, overwhelmed them. The Augustan system, as a mere speculation in philosophy, I quite admire—as I do the Sphinx in Egypt. Many carvings have come down to us from Athens which I admire ; but I would not say my prayers to them, though they are admirable in themselves. Calvinism is so wrought out that every joint is perfect and every part is perfectly fitted to every other part. It is a charming system in these respects ; but when you hold it up as a view of God that men are to pray to and put their trust in, it is not so charming. Calvinism, as it is constructed and developed, is not a system of remedial mercy, but quite the opposite, and in that regard is as unscrip-

tural and false as it can be ; and yet Calvinism has always been a tremendous power for civilization. It has stirred men up amazingly. It is precisely adapted to men with great reasoning and moral faculties. It takes such men, and fashions them into noble specimens of the human race. And historians and advocates of Calvinism say, "Look at the men who have grown up in this system. Look at the champions of Calvinism in Scotland and mid-Europe. Wherever you have found the Calvinistic theology and Calvinistic churches, there you have been sure to find sturdy, heroic men." I say so, too. The point that I make against Calvinism is, that it takes men of ideology, of taste, of a higher moral nature, and fashions them into a tremendous class, overleaping the great multitude of men who cannot rise intellectually or esthetically or morally to the ideal which it holds up. It sacrifices a million men to make one ! Is that the spirit of the Gospel ? Is that the spirit of God ? Is that the spirit of him who came down to earth, and died to save men who were in sin and were his enemies ? A God who predetermines, from eternity, the damnation of unutterable millions ; a God that created the world to pour into the eternal sphere endless woes and tribulations—that is the God of Calvinism. Is that the God that is represented by him who gave up his life rather than that the lowest and the least should suffer ? But looking at it, not theologically, but purely in a philosophical point of view, its mischief consists, not in its being a misrepresentation of God merely, but in its being a presentation of God and of divinity which, while adapted to the powerful, the highest, the aristocracy, was oppressive to the less favored. The great mass of men could not bear to be screwed up to the requisitions of such a system, as the rule of life. Thus, while it made remarkable men of a few, it crushed all the rest. These heroes of the higher faith were nourished on the blood of millions of men who were sacrificed to that faith !

The same thing is continually going on now. Take the life and writings of Jonathan Edwards. No man can tell how much we are indebted to him, for raising the style of thought, and for introducing into intellectual discussion an element which will not be expended when you and I and our children are dead, and long ages have passed by. And yet, if you take *Edwards on the Affections*, and read it, you will find it one of the most searching, and scourging, and discouraging of books. I think that if the Angel Gabriel were sent down to this world, and should read *Edwards on the Affections*, he would hang his harp on the willow, and think he was one of the reprobates, and had no right to be saved ! The discriminations

in that book are very nice, the insight is extraordinary, the scope is remarkable, the aggregation is wonderful ; but it is almost fatal to read it conscientiously, and with implicit belief in it ; because the ideal which it makes of a perfect Christian experience is such as not one man in a million—and then not he—can ever reach. That is the ideal which it holds up, and it says, “ This is what God expects us to be.” And by way of confirmation, the declaration is quoted that “ the Word of God is quick, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Yes, but what is the inference? “ Naked and open are we before him with whom we have to do ” ; “ let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” It is here an argument of trust ; but where it has been presented, as in Edwards’ writings, and by his school, and where men are held rigidly to the ideal, I say it is an oppression. It is using an ideal so as to make it a despotism to those who are too low down to reach it. Under such circumstances, there is no compassion in it.

This is generally the effect, too, of the Lives of good men—of Page, of Martyn, of Brainard, of Edward Payson, and of other eminent men whose biographies we have. In the first place, they generally give us nothing but the cream. They skim them. And then they usually churn the cream to butter. And then they make that up into little charming rolls, with the stamp of the church on them. And those are served out to men, as specimens of what they are expected to be ! I suppose, if we were to be apportioned off to our different follies, it would take me ten years to repent of my folly in trying to be what I never was cut out to be. I tried to be several of those men, when I was a young man. I tried my very hardest to be Brainard ; and I should have succeeded, if God had not fixed it so that I could not. I tried to be Payson ; but Payson was dyspeptic, and I was not. I tried to be Henry Martyn, and wanted to be a missionary, and sit under a tree in Persia, and say the things that he said, and think the things that he thought. In Amherst, I tried and strove to live up to these ideals, but I could not do it. Who would think of pouring out on his plate mustard, and vinegar, and pepper, and such things, and making a dinner of them ? These things are good, to wake up and quicken the appetite, but are not to be used as steady food ; and so these lives are good as examples for the purpose of stimulation, but they are to be used with discrimination. No man is to sit before any of these ideals for his portrait. You might as well send your neighbor to the pho-

tographer's to sit for your picture, or to the tailor to be measured for your clothes, because it is not convenient for you to go, as to take for your pattern of life men who are themselves, but not you. Principles and truths are given to us for our direction ; but men are to grow as the trees do. The peach-tree grows like a peach-tree, the poplar like a poplar, the oak like an oak, the cedar like a cedar, and the spruce like a spruce ; and God hath given to every man the form that pleaseth him. In the wealth of divine conception, a great variety of minds have been given to men ; and every man should be well enough acquainted with himself to know how to follow the line of God's creative wisdom as expressed in him.

Now, ideals, held up by treatises, by systematic views of Christianity, or biographical representations that are too high and too difficult of attainment for the mass of mankind, become despotic. I am, in my own ministry, perpetually obliged to release men from the despotism of high ideals.

Take the ideal in regard to one's sense of sinfulness. A man is asked if he ever had it. He says, "No, I never did." "Do you say that you have never been under a conviction of sin?" "No, sir, I have not." "Have you never, at the close of the day, felt the greatest annoyance and disappointment because you had falsified almost every one of the maxims of the Bible?" "Oh, yes, I have felt that." "Have you never felt so disturbed by your temper that you were dissatisfied with yourself, and unhappy?" "Oh, yes, I have felt that, of course ; I suppose everybody feels it." "Has there never been a quarrel between your reason and conscience and your will? Have you not felt that such a thing was the right thing to do, and have you not found that you could not do it when you tried? And have you never felt self-condemnation?" "Why, yes, I have felt that." "What do you mean, then, when you say that you have never had a conviction of sin?" "Well, I have supposed that a conviction of sin was something that would come up like a thunder-storm ; that, first, clouds would appear above the horizon ; that then they would spread, and grow black ; that by-and-by lightning would rend the sky, and thunders would shake the heavens ; that the wind would blow fiercely ; that the rain would fall in torrents ; that the trees would swing and groan ; that the birds would fly and the animals would run ; that I should hear the voice of God condemning me as a sinner, that I should be stricken to the ground ; and that after I had wallowed there for a time in distress and anguish, there would come a shooting light from somewhere ; and that I should look up to see that the clouds were all gone, and that the trees were shedding pearly drops of water, and that the house would

not look as it had looked before ; that the oxen would be angelic, that the birds would be seraphic, and that I should have, oh ! such a blessed time !”

Well, now, I believe, verily, that when God converts poets, he converts them in that way. I have known men who had such conversions, and who were truly converted. I have seen persons who had such pictorial views of God and his government, and such peculiar conjunctions of emotion, that their experience became dramatic. Such was their temperament, that their feelings rolled and surged as the waves of the ocean do when a storm is on it, breaking and thundering on the shore. But suppose a well wanted to be stirred up, and mourned because it could not break and thunder its waves on the shore ! A well has to be a well, and an ocean has to be an ocean.

If a man of a vigorous imagination, and deep emotions, and a dramatic temperament, has been stirred to the foundations, and if by-and-by he is, by reaction, or fatigue, or both, or by some sudden opening of the truth, brought out of midnight darkness into noonday, then everything in him spheres up in radiant hues. I do not say that there are not conversions like these ; but I do say that when you take an exceptional case, a remarkable instance, a dramatic conversion, and hold it up as a type of what conversion should be, you oppress one who has not imagination. And there are many who go mourning all their days because they have not had conviction of sin—such a conviction of sin as they have been taught to suppose one must have before he can be converted. They have been trying to do their duty ; they have been trying to live according to the precepts of the Bible, but they never have had such conviction as other men have had, and they are discouraged. The high ideal which has been presented to them, and which they cannot reach, is an oppression to them. There are in this congregation men who are as good Christians as are to be seen in any church ; men who are as really in communion with God as any that are to be found in any Christian fellowship ; men of the sweetest life and the purest character ; and they stand outside of the church because they think they have not complied with the conditions of conversion, since they have not attained to a certain ideal which they suppose to be the test of a regenerated state.

I go one step farther in illustration of this subject. The New Testament contains transcendent ideals of Christian character. Nowhere else are there such conceptions of friendship and justice ; nowhere else such outreaches of the truth in its luminous purity and absoluteness ; nowhere else such examples of disinterested

benevolence and kindness; nowhere else such injunctions to straightness of walk and conversation and fidelity to God.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God *with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.*"

O God! what a thought! Oh! how absolutely impossible! But such is the ideal. God be blessed that it is not one particle lower! God be blessed for the radiancy of the conception that is hid in it! But must every man, before he can hope in Christ, stand saying, "I do love God with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength?" You are a liar, if you say it! Never was there a man on earth that did it. Neither will there be one, till he is brought out of the flesh, and stands in the potency of spiritual life. And yet this is the bright ideal toward which we are striving, and making advancement. Can any man say that he loves his neighbor as himself—not occasionally, not by fits and starts, but steadily and habitually? Let any man tell me that who dares! There is no man who can stand the test of this ideal for an hour or a moment. One might stand it, if he were sick and on his pillow; but that would not prove anything. A man may be a saint on his back who is a devil on his feet! Take many a man who, in his house, is shielded, so that his better feelings have a chance to play, and put him in the street, and bring temptations on him, and goad him, and drive him hither and thither, and see how he will act. Have you tried to love your neighbor as yourself? Have you tried it in bankruptcy? Have you tried it when you were hard pressed, and you could take advantage? Did a man who was in debt to you and to others fail; and did you have a chance to run in and settle favorably to yourself before anybody should find it out; and did you show that you loved your neighbor as yourself, by notifying everybody, and giving everybody an equal chance?

When barn-yard fowls find a morsel of food, they "coo coo, coo," and let every fowl have a chance; but when dogs find a bit of meat, they grab it, and run and hide, that they may have it all themselves. And men take after dogs in this particular!

As I have said, the ideal of human life and character is bright and luminous. Keep it so. I would not have it dimmed. Sound it abroad with all the eloquence that you can command. But then, it is merciful. It is proclaimed by him who is so gentle that "the bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench, till he bring forth judgment unto victory."

Do you recollect that exquisite passage in which Paul speaks of **what he was among the Thessalonians?**

"Neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of

covetousness: God is witness; neither of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us."

Was Paul better than God and Christ? He said, substantially, "I take care of you, as a nurse takes care of children? How does the nurse take care of children? Does she say to the little crippled boy, "You brat! why don't you walk as other children do?" Not at all. That boy gets more of her attention than any of the other children—if she is a true nurse. If she is a brutal, unsympathizing nurse, she says, to the dull and imperfectly organized child, "Why are you not as smart and good as that child?"—pointing to one that is bright and harmonious in its organization; but the true nurse, or the true mother, sympathizes most with those that are most in need, is most patient with those that tax and burden her most, and is most devoted to those that are the most faulty among the children under her care.

Now, the love of a true nurse or mother is the best interpretation that we have of atoning love in Jesus Christ. And the disposition of the Saviour is, while holding up the ideal of Christian life and character to men, to help them in striving after it, and to say to them, "Imperfect you are, but you are trying to attain perfection, and that is all I ask. I take you, and will aid you; and all that you lack, I will pass by. I will forget it." What becomes of it? What becomes of anything that you forget? God says, "I will remember your sin no more. I will cast it into the depths of the sea."

There is, throughout the Old Testament and the New, this infinite tenderness and lenity in dealing with men who are striving for an ideal, which makes the Bible the most wonderful of books. It is a most wonderful book, not only in exalting the conceptions of duty, but also in its treatment of men who are not able to reach those conceptions. On one side, it keeps the picture radiant, so that the eye is dazzled in looking at it, and turns toward the ground; on the other side, with arms about us, and with kindly words, as a schoolmaster, it helps us to Christ; and Christ, as our elder brother, brings us to our Father. Especially the friendliness, the exaltation, the nobility, the gentleness, the encouragement, the helpfulness, and the beautifulness of the New Testament, make it the most wonderful book ever thought of.

Do men threaten to throw away that Book on the ground that it is not inspired? I would like to know what inspiration is, if

you do not find it in the Bible. Where else than in that Book can you find a system running through six thousand years, so uniform in every part; so analogous in its different parts, reaching from lower conditions to higher ones; and marked with such marvelous illustrations, and such an extraordinary application of educating forces, tempered by forbearing love and mercy? Where was there ever such an exhibition of moral truth, outside of the Bible? Nature is rigorous, unyielding, inexorable. It says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "For the soul that sinneth, I have found a ransom," saith God. He dealeth with us as with sons; and though he will chastise us, and give us pain, and cause tears of anguish to flow from our eyes, it is that he may make us partakers of the divine nature.

I cannot bear to have the Bible go into disuse. I hate to see men fighting with the Bible. I turn away from the scene with unbounded disgust. The Word of God is like a garden.

When soldiers have lost their health in battle, or from the exposures of climate, the Government establishes sanitariums at favorable points, where these soldiers, crippled or broken down, may go and recover their strength. There are beautiful hospital buildings, delightful grounds, and exquisite flowers provided for their comfort and enjoyment. The conveniences by which they are surrounded, the beauty of the scene, and the fragrance which, day and night, fills the atmosphere, conspire to make their condition most enjoyable and satisfactory. A thousand men go there; and at once they fall into wrangling about questions of architectural propriety. "This building," say some of them, "is faulty in its construction. I can prove that it has violated the very fundamental rules of mechanics." And so they get into a quarrel on the subject of architecture and mechanics. "I never saw," these fault-finders go on to say, "such incongruous elements combined in a building." Another set go into the garden, and, instead of plucking the sweet flowers and delicious fruits, and enjoying them, they fall to quarreling about them. One man says, "Do you know that Linneus and other botanists differ so and so, in respect to such and such plants? Which side do you take?" One says, "I take this side;" another says, "I take that." And they go to work to prove that certain flowers have so many stamens and petals and pistils, and that certain fruits have such and such peculiarities; and they commence tearing the flowers to pieces, and the apples and pears and quinces fly in every direction, hitting one man here and another there. At length, fatigued, exhausted, they take a respite; but when they have rested themselves, they go at it again. And they renew the

conflict from day to day. The sanitarium and everything in it were provided for their comfort ; and yet they make them a source of contention and unhappiness. The garden was prepared for their delight, and they destroy it. They vex themselves, and annoy each other, in trying to settle scientific questions.

Now, is not that the way the Bible has been used ? Do you not find the Arminian, the Calvinist, the Arian, and the Trinitarian, quarreling about its contents ? Do you not find that, all the way through the history of the Church, the Word of God has been a great field on which hostile armies have been organized, and fierce battles have been fought ? Have not controversies the most furious been carried on over it by its adherents, age after age ? That Book, full of sympathy and consolation ; that Book, full of aspiration and yearning ; that Book, full of help and comfort ; that Book, full of forbearance and friendship, full of light and joy, full of gentleness and mercy,—that Book has been the worst used book that was *ever* on the globe. But God will save it. He has saved it thus far, and he will save it to the end. The time is coming when the conflicts concerning it will cease, and it will stand redeemed from the injurious usage of days gone by. Men are beginning to apply to it those great rules of historic criticism and discrimination which will redeem it.

The Word of God is the book of the common people ; it is the working-man's book ; it is the child's book ; it is the slave's book ; it is the book of every creature that is down-trodden ; it is a book that carries with it the leaven of God's soul ; it is a book that tends to make men larger and better and sweeter, and that succors them all through life ; and do you suppose it is going to be lost out of the world ? When the Bible is lost out of the world, it will be because there are no men in it who are in trouble and need succoring ; no men who are oppressed and need release ; no men who are in darkness and need light ; no men who are hungry and need food ; no men who are sinning and need mercy ; no men who are lost and need the salvation of God.

Let us, therefore, take the Word of God as our friend, and hold it to our heart, and make it the man of our counsel, our guide, the lamp to our feet, the light to our path. Use it, as God meant it to be used, as the soul's food and the soul's joy, and it shall be your life's rest.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE thank thee, O Lord our God, for those bounties that are new every morning, and fresh every moment; that find us out everywhere—in the darkness and in the light; at home and abroad. Even in sickness we are sustained in the arms of divine mercy. In disasters and troubles we are still with God. We rejoice that to all who know thee, to all who can appreciate thy presence in the great world outside of us, to all who experience thy presence in their own inward consciousness, to all who can take thy Word and transmit and transmute its sentences into their own understanding and knowledge—we rejoice that to all these thou art a God of infinite goodness, and mercy, and truth. Thou art a God of inspiration, and upbuilding, and helpfulness. Thou art stimulating to development, and thou art comforting to those who are weary with striving. Thou dost pity those who have fallen down. Thou dost have compassion upon all mankind. Thou knowest that the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath sustained him in hope. Thou knowest that the whole creation is groaning and travailing. Thou knowest that there is a life of which all our sufferings here are but the birth-pains, and toward which hands helpless, even, are reached forth; toward which ten thousand endeavors are co-operating everywhere. Thou art not alone the God of the Church, here and there shut up in houses that men have built. Nor art thou alone the God of nations, parcelled and appropriated selfishly. Nor art thou alone the God of those that are civilized. Nor art thou alone the God of those that are Christianized. Thou art the God of the whole earth. Thy compassion is toward all thy creatures. We could not live, if we did not believe that thou who dost sit turning the shadow and the darkness upon all the myriads that are wrestling with time and chance art mindful of them. We could not live, while men sigh, and groan, and long, and yearn, and know not what to do, if we believed that thou didst permit the wild elements and dark shapes to sweep through the world, and didst not care for those who suffered from these things. How couldst thou do it, great God of goodness? We know that thou dost care. All that we know of thee interprets thee. All thy greatness and bounty, all thy gentleness and helpfulness, all thy sweetness and purity, all the light of thy nature, all thy mercifulness and goodness, teach us that thou dost care for every living creature. Thou hast thyself said that thou dost care for the sparrow; and dost thou not care for men? Thou dost count the hairs of our head, and is the head from which they spring of no value?

We rejoice in thee, unversal Father, God over all, blessed forever, and forever blessing! We do not seek to pierce thy counsels, nor to understand all thy ways. Thou must be higher than our understanding, or thou couldst not be God. If we worshiped on a level with our comprehension, we could not worship thee. If we compassed thee with our thought, thou wouldst be no larger than we are; but the lines of thy being transcend the reach of our understanding, so that none by searching can find thee out, nor understand the Almighty to perfection. Something of thy nature we know, and we are blessed in every particle that we know; but the orb, the great circuit of thy being, compared with which life on the earth is but as a drop of dew compared to the globe—who shall know this, and yet be a man? To take in the whole amplitude of thy nature were to destroy ourselves. We could not contain it.

We rejoice that there is so much of thee; that thou art so far beyond our experience of earthly life; that thou art so much better than the best; so much nobler than the most noble; so much sweeter than the dearest; so

much wiser than those that are the most experienced and the wisest among men. As high as the heaven is above the earth, so high are thy thoughts above our thoughts; so high are thy mercies above our mercies. We rejoice in thee—in all that we understand of thee. We have unlimited faith that that which is yet to be revealed shall be infinitely better than that which has been revealed; that it shall weave itself on to the things which we comprehend; and that then our knowledge, irradiated by the more perfect light of the other life, shall seem to us not less true than now, but more glorious in its truth, when all that lies beyond shall wax greater and more potential. Blessed be thy name, thou who art all in all, that thou art sovereign; that thou canst not be turned from thy course; and that the everlasting decrees of thy providence and mercy hold on their way, too high for men to batter, or for any artillery of their reason to destroy. Thou art God, and canst not take counsel with any, because thou givest counsel to all. We rejoice that thou art supreme. We could not rest, if it were power alone; nor if it were wisdom; nor if it were justice; but as it is love, bearing in itself justice, and wisdom, and power, and truth, and goodness, we have implicit trust. We put ourselves into thy hands. We put our life there. Living or dying, we are the Lord's. We know no other life than that which we have in thee. We have joined ourselves to thy life. We would not join ourselves to that which is in this world. We have no ambition except to work in the great eternal channels of thy providence; to do that which thou art doing, and which thou dost desire us to do; to live as long as it pleaseth thee, and to die when it suits thee. And then we believe that we shall be, not thrown into annihilation and darkness, but gathered into the higher company of the spirits of just men made perfect. And there we shall look back, to smile over tears; to rejoice over defeats; to marvel at our wanderings; and to see how, all the way, thou wert guiding us by a silver thread that never once broke; that whatever sorrow, or disaster, or suffering thou didst send upon us was for our good; that thou didst convert all the evil which thou didst permit to overtake us into final benefit. We shall behold thee as thou art, and thy way on earth, in the light and glory of thine interpretation.

And now we pray that the comfort of God may be with every one of us. Behold, to-day, we pray thee, those who are poor, that they may have the unspeakable riches of thy grace. We pray for all those who are harassed and vexed in their affairs, that they may find, beyond and above all human happiness, that peace which passeth all understanding. We pray for all that are alone, or lonely, among men, that they may have the presence of God. Thou, Jesus, wert without companionship on earth, and yet thou didst say that thou wert not alone, because the Father was with thee; and wilt thou be with all those who need companionship, and have it not. Be with the young; with the wandering; with those who are unrestrained, and who are progressing farther and farther in evil; and turn them back to that which is right and noble; and may they know the compassion of God, and trust in his mercy and love.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt be with all those who are burdened and troubled because they have done wrong, or are doing wrong. O thou that dost behold the best as ever doing imperfectly and wrongfully, have compassion upon the great world's population, that are striving upward with infinite infirmities toward infinite perfection. And we beseech of thee that thou wilt give to us all the heart that thou hast in thine own self; with gentleness; with forbearance; with kindness, one to another; with forgiving love; with compassion.

Grant that we may look, not with the eyes of animals upon animals, to rend and tear. May we rather have breathed into us the spirit of our Father in heaven. May we desire to suffer rather than to cause suffering.

We pray that thou wilt fill thy Churches, everywhere, with that spirit of Christ which led him to bow down his head in sorrow and darkness—Him that stood in the utmost glory—that he might bring to the erring and lost light, and life, and heavenly salvation. May there be the pitifulness of Christ in all his disciples. May all thy Churches throw down the battered walls and the artillery with which they have vexed and annoyed men, and give peace to them. Where the landscape has been torn up by camps and warring soldiers; where all things have been disfigured or destroyed by violence, give us back again the sweet possession of the flowers and fruit of that peace which thy Word was sent to this world.

We pray that thou wilt fulfill thy promises which thou hast made toward the race. May we understand thee better, and be more patient in waiting for thee; and may we never have a doubt that, in the end, thou wilt gather all thine own, that the whole world will be redeemed, and that the new heaven and the new earth will dwell together in righteousness.

Hear us in these our petitions, and answer us, through Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon the word spoken. Teach us, who have had the Bible all our lives without knowing anything about it, to learn what treasures there are waiting for us. Teach us to look at it with eyes enlightened by thy Spirit. May we know the voice of God as different from the voice of men. We pray that thou wilt teach us the truth, not only, but the kindness, the sweetness, and the gentleness in thy Word; and give us aspiration, give us encouragement, keep us from despair, and make us all the way through life to strive, though we be conscious all the while of not attaining, until we reach that higher and blessed ground where we shall see thee as thou art, and be satisfied, even with ourselves. And the praise of our salvation we will give to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. *Amen.*

THIS LIFE COMPLETED IN THE LIFE TO COME.

"For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."—
Heb. xiii. 14.

We are not to suppose that ours is the era of great cities, as compared with earlier periods. City-building, in some respects, was more remarkable in antiquity than it is now. With us, the building of cities follows private enterprise. It follows some law, whatever it may be, within itself. There was a time when a sovereign so owned his people, and the wealth of the whole region, that he could build as he pleased. A unity of power and design and unexampled richness enabled the city-builder of antiquity to do even more than the freedom of modern enterprise achieves in our day. The Egyptian cities were, according to the best accounts, full memorable; and the Babylonian and Assyrian cities yet, in their ruins, attest their magnitude and magnificence. The whole country east of the Jordan, in the time of Christ, was alive with cities. Galilee was so populous that Josephus says there were some fifteen hundred cities, with over ten thousand inhabitants apiece; and modern research is showing that ruin touches ruin all over that land. In Eschalon there are still the memorials of Greek and Roman achievement in the building of cities; and farther to the southeast some most extraordinary cities are standing to-day in the wilderness as perfect as they did in the hour when the hammer ceased to sound on them,—the doors of stone turning as if they had never turned before, and the silent streets and empty houses being absolutely void, and for centuries without a history, the very knowledge of who built them and held them being lost.

Cities, then, so far from being a product of this later day, belong rather to antiquity than to modern times.

To the Jews, a city had a significance which it scarcely had to

any other. You know how anxiously their own history was impressed upon their mind and their imagination, and how it was the design of God to develop in them, through patriotism, the religious feeling. And so every element of their history was celebrated—the experiences of the fathers; their going down into Egypt; their captivity; and their wanderings in the wilderness. It was during the long period of these wanderings, when they dwelt in camps and tents, that *city* had a special meaning in the ear of the Jews—particularly when Jerusalem became in good earnest a city, and the temple had been built, so that the altar was no longer kept in a tabernacle. Round about the temple, on mighty rock-hills, the city itself was established, and was walled in; and when its palaces multiplied, then Jerusalem became glorious; and the Psalmist's and the prophets' writings are full of celebrations over the great city of God—Jerusalem.

But strong and glorious as it was, after all, it was not a real refuge. The very city of Jerusalem that, as compared with the wandering camps and tents of skins or of canvas, seemed to be a marvel of permanence, might be a shelter and defense from the minor evils of life, such as the aggression of armies, the inroads of oppressors, the assaults of outward enemies of every kind; but what help could it furnish for those unavoidable evils which, after all, bring into life more suffering than the armed hand—care, fear, remorse, disappointment, bereavement—those mischiefs which lift no banner, and sound no trumpet, which move by day and by night, and invade all cities and all dwellings. Old Jerusalem could not deliver nor be a refuge from these enemies, which eat the heart and core out of life more than ever it is crushed out by oppression.

When famine and death came; when the cradle and the couch were desolated; when child, parent, companion and fellow-laborer were taken away, then there was no refuge in Jerusalem. It afforded no protection against such adversaries. The ten thousand burdens of life, all the things which mainly beat upon humanity and afflict it—there was no release in the city from these.

The language of the text is not full of despondency and sadness: it is courageous; it is hopeful. The course of thought is remarkable for its unconscious ingenuity. It exhorts men to be established through grace in the Lord Jesus Christ. It says:

"It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace: not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Be religious, not by mere form and ceremony, but by actual experiences of the soul.

That naturally reminded him of the sacrifices that were offered on the altar ; and he spiritualized them :

"We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat, which serve the tabernacle [the Jews who do not accept Christ]."

And then, while speaking of the altar, one of the facts connected with sacrifices comes to his mind :

"For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high-priest for sin, are burned without the camp."

And that suggests the fact that Christ suffered outside of the city of Jerusalem :

"Wherefore, Jesus, also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

Leave the city ; give up the refuge and the stronghold ; follow that man who was a malefactor in the eye of the law ; go off to the camp with him.

"For here have we no continuing city ; but we seek one to come."

Give yourself to your religious faith—to that faith which once carried with it ostracism and reproach ; to that faith which blocked up the ways of life ; to that faith which made patriotism itself a torment and a burden. Go boldly out after Jesus, no matter if you abandon old Jerusalem. You have no continuing city here. This is good for a while, but there is something better. We seek a city—another and better one. An invisible and superior life was held out as a cheer and a comfort amid the infelicities, the infidelities, the sufferings and the duties of this lower mortal life.

There is in the Bible no formal consecutive statement of the uses of this life. Its duties are continually pointed out to us ; the motives to right conduct are sharpened and pressed home upon us ; but there is no philosophical statement in the Bible, anywhere, of the full design and purpose of this mortal life. Why were men born into the world ? Why were they put into such circumstances and such relations ? What need was there that men who are to be gathered home to heaven should start so far away, and on a road so rugged, so precipitous and so dangerous ? Nothing is told us on these points. Nor are our relations with the other life stated with such philosophical definiteness as that with which we to-day are attempting to state them. Scattered here and there are glimpses, hints, partial statements ; and from these, illustrated by our experience, we derive no inconsiderable knowledge—at any rate, approximations toward knowledge—of the relations which this life sustains to the other.

That this life is a stage on which to develop the human soul is

scarcely to be doubted. All our good things are evolved from the conditions of human life. The evolution of faculty into conduct and into character; the fixing of principles in a man's life, so that they become powers in him,—these things are accomplished by the schooling of life itself. No man inherits activity, enterprise, foresight, justice, benevolence, the finer feelings. They are developed in him by training; and it is a training for which this world is specially adapted. It is a good grinding world. It is a good sharpening world. It is a good stimulating world. It is not a restful world altogether. It is a world that wakes men up, and by ten thousand necessities on every side compels them to think, and to think far ahead; to forbear, and to deny themselves; to restrain self-indulgence; to consider others as well as themselves; to combine thoughts, and to systematize them. It is a world which is educating men into practical philosophy and economy. The world, by its very necessities, engenders in men these various traits; and it is fair, since it does so universally, to say that it was designed to do so.

At a later stage, these qualities in parents become transmissible; and yet, not the less are they educated by the relations sustained to daily duty in practical life. No matter with what endowment or genius in morals or æsthetics a man comes into life, no man is so endowed that he is not obliged to feel the pressure of the great round world upon him. Religious institutions can never do the work of the economic and social institutions of society. Religion does its work. It holds up a higher ideal than would naturally be engendered in life. It also discloses to us the relations of present virtue or vice to future consequences. But above all, religion has in its bosom the light and the stimulus that are necessary to bring men to the use of this mortal life. It is not itself a substitute for daily duties. It is that which teaches us how to perform those duties. It is the stimulus by which we are moved to a performance of them. It is like a chart: it shows where we are to sail. It is like a map: it describes the country, but does not cultivate it. It is like a scientific treatise on grain and fruit: it does not contain crops, but gives directions for raising them. A book on farming has in it instruction by which men, going out of the book into the field, develop fruit and grain. And the Word of God is a book of directions which stimulates us to develop out of practical life a daily religious experience. For there is no religion except in the vital powers of men in a state of activity. Religion is something that is in the living souls of living men, and not something that is outside of men, and that descends upon them.

The world being a training school, men are held to it. It is right that men should live, and that they should wish to live, since the world is a school where God is preparing them for a higher condition. The instinct of life, without a thought, is very strong in the race at large. Man's spontaneous self-defense is a sort of psychologic record of the early stages through which the race has passed.

This desire of living differs in different individuals and races. Among certain portions of the Chinese, it would seem as though the desire of life was almost unfelt. They accept death with the same equanimity with which we would accept a bath, or any slight variation of our daily duty. We can scarcely understand a race that is so apathetic, and in whom the instinct of life is so feeble, that it scarcely acts at all. But, in general, the instinct of life is so strong that it overacts, and men are more afraid of dying than of dishonor. To save life, men sacrifice whatever is noble in manhood, thus showing the overaction of this instinct.

To the instinct of living are added the chords that bind men to life, derived from the affections, and the relations which the affections sustain in this world. When men are standing in groups, as parents and children, or brothers and sisters, or companions, or partners in life, it is not strange that over and above the instinct of life, which has no thoughtfulness, there should be a strong desire to live for the sake of love, and all the relations which have been brooded by love.

Then, the pursuits of life add farther stimulus to continuance here. For, when men are roused up by ambition, and are interested in the procuring of property, they experience a pleasurable excitement in their vocations. The pursuits of the chase and of angling are known to be very exciting; and of the same kind, only enlarged and more variously rich, are the pursuits of ambition for power and for wealth, and for all those elements that go with wealth and power. When men are actively engaged in life, they want to live, frequently, not because they are afraid to die, not because there is not something very good beyond, but because they have so identified themselves with stimulating and rewarding pursuits, that they desire to carry them on, and carry them out. These things were added to the original instinct, to bind men to this life.

Then, there are the attainments which we reach. When men have surrounded themselves, by good and honest labor of their own, with competence, with things pleasant to the senses and to the soul; when they have the testimony of their conscience that they are wisely employing all the bounties of divine providence which they

have been instrumental in procuring ; when they are conscious that they are administering them nobly and generously ; that they are protectors of the weak ; that they are eyes to the blind ; that they are a right-hand of power to those that have no defenders ; that their thought-power, and motive-power, and wealth, are used for promoting the happiness of their fellow-men—then it is right and proper that they should stand with pride in the midst of their resources, and be glad of God's goodness to them, and wish to continue still to live in the land which the Lord has given them.

So there was no need of promulgating a law against taking one's life. That is not the besetting sin of the world. It is provided for by an instinct which overacts rather than underacts. It usually makes men cowards in moral things. They are bound to this life by their attainments, by their pursuits, and by their affections, as well as by the instinct of life.

Nor was the life to come so disclosed to men as to put this life to shame. Aside from other reasons why the great future is obscured from us, there seems to be the idea that a clear disclosure of a life higher than this, would tend to defeat that education for which this life was instituted. The revelation of the next life might have set up a contrast, to the shame of this life. The life to come might have been made to appear so desirable that no man would long to stay. If heaven were represented to men as so sure, so ample, and so visible that the world itself seemed like a mere shadow ; if the other side were made so bright that this side stood in a perpetual twilight, men would be left without courage to discharge those duties on which their development depends. As passengers on a voyage merely while away the time, without studying or applying any department of knowledge, neither building nor reaping, but only waiting to get to their destination, with the joyful prospect of standing once again on a firm foundation ; so it would be with men in this world, if they had such a sense of the other life as to take no interest in this. They would say, "The best thing a man can do is to wait," and would make no exertion to profit by their circumstances and relations here, relying upon the hope and expectation of being exalted and ennobled yonder.

Hence the notable wisdom of Scripture, which so discloses the life to come as that it shall in the first place inspire activity in goodness on earth. It was not left carelessly. It was not in vain, I take it, that the method of divine teaching was such as it was. It had a distinct relation to the end of things. Experience teaches us that the revelation of the life which is to come has inspired men with intense enterprise, intense activity, and that they have been

willing, for the sake of that which they dimly desiered, but did not fully understand, to bear, to forbear, and to go through all the disgrace and endure all the trials that were necessary for the bringing out of a perfect manhood in this world.

The wisdom of Scripture in its mode of disclosing the life to come is seen, too, in this : that it gives courage under difficulties and dangers. For, though we may not know what is the sum of all the joys which are involved in living beyond the grave, though we may not enter into all the particulars, though certainly the familiar flow of events there is not given to us, yet we have a vague, indistinct, but perhaps none the less stimulating sense that the other life is a remuneration for this ; that it fills up the deficiencies of this ; that it cleanses away the imperfections of this. It gives just enough hope to inspire courage, and make men patient under difficulties and dangers. If they are valiant here, and if they endure to the end, they shall be pillars in the temple of God.

While, on the one hand, revelation is not so clear as to make men ashamed, or take away from them the taste and relish of things here present, it is clear enough, and stimulating enough, to make men courageous under dangers and difficulties in this life. If it had not been for the hope of heaven, thousands, tens of thousands, myriads of long-suffering heroes, of whom the world is not worthy, would not have had their names recorded, and would not have been the heroes that they were.

So, too, the wisdom of Scripture, in its mode of teaching the other life, is shown in that it spiritualizes earthly enjoyments. For we are taught that that life and this have necessary and inseparable connections ; that, in some way, cause and effect have their operation respecting both ; and that what we sow we shall reap. If, therefore, we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. The revelation of the other life tends to spiritualize every one of the enjoyments of this life. The flesh tends toward the animal—toward brutality. We are perpetually thrown down toward sensuousness. It is well that we have a great heaven over us, filled with symbols, and not with realities, to our eye—with interpretatious and prophesies that are full of vague yet intense stimulus, tending to draw us away from the senses, and to make our joys purer and higher, as well as brighter and better.

It is so revealed, too, that it repairs the losses and rounds out the imperfections of this life. To a reflective mind, there is nothing sadder than the endless mistakes that seem to be part and parcel of human necessity. There are thousands, myriads, who stand in life

with a very small capital; and that is wasted rather than increased. In the majority of cases, one talent remains one talent. Now and then five talents produce five others; or ten talents produce ten others; but taking the race throughout, how exceedingly imperfect it is! Where there is one good horse that dies and makes his loss felt, a hundred men die without being missed in any way whatever. The noblest thing that ever was put upon the earth is the human soul in the body; and the cheapest thing that was ever put upon the earth is that same soul. The superfluity of time is mankind. Millions of men die every single year, and do not leave a thought behind them for which the world is any better. Millions of men die who have never made one invention; who have never improved a road; who have never enhanced the value of a utensil in the house; who have never polished the ways of life; who have never added one incitement to virtue; who have never been more than the moth-miller; who have simply been born, cried through their childhood, and eaten and gnawed as the mice or worms eat and gnaw. They were filled full; they rounded out their life; they died, and went back to dust. And if you ask in an hour, in a day, in a week, in a month, in a year, what is lost—nothing! They are not missed from their place. Nay, more pitiful than all, their place was waited for. And when, at last, they are shuffled out, another steps in, and is better off for their going.

To look upon this, going on in the East, in the West, in the North, in the South, and upon all continents and islands; to see races and generations of men, with all their imperfections and weaknesses, dropping out of this sphere of existence, and sinking into forgetfulness,—cannot but fill with profound ponderings the mind of every reflective man who reads the queries, whether God is the God of the Jews only, or whether he is the God of the Gentiles also; or when he hears the question discussed, whether heathen nations are objects of God's mercy or not.

But when we bring the matter nearer home, and look at our own lives, our minds are still exercised in much the same way. Consider now small a part of our life is redeemed from mere fleshly existence. Consider how large a part of human life is spent in sleep. During one-third of a man's life he is shoved back into the shop for repairs—for night is but a repair shop. Eight hours is the average daily amount of sleep. There are twenty-four hours in a day, and one-third of that period is used up in black nothingness, only getting materials together for the other two-thirds. And if you take out of the remainder all the time that is required for eating, and the various pauses and intervals that occur during the day, it may, I

think, be said that full one-half of a man's life is waste, and is made so by the economy in which we are born, and by the necessities of the condition in which we are placed.

If, then, you take into account the fact that, so far as the uses of life are concerned, men are born without knowledge, born inexperienced, born with poor teachers, born, some in the far frigid north, some in neighborhoods where there is but little culture, some where they are surrounded by honest, virtuous, true men, some in one place and some in another, without their choice, and in endlessly varied circumstances, and with such a lack of information that they have to make long circuits to do things which, if they were instructed, could be done by them in a moment; if you consider how many things miscarry; if you bear in mind how much of the best part of life is squandered, you cannot but be filled with sadness and mourning. And if it were not that, after all, it is not what a man eats, nor what he drinks, nor what he wears, nor what he builds, nor what he leaves behind him at death, but what he carries with him beyond the grave,—if it were not that this tells the story; if it were not true that the kingdom of heaven is within a man, and that what he is determines his worth in the life to come, the contemplation of this subject would be unendurable. There is many a boor, who, according to his circumstances and ability, is patient, honest, and self-sacrificing, and who is endeavoring to build up and strengthen the elements of an inward manhood, that lie undisclosed in the body, but are there, and only want the right conditions to develop them. In the month of March, ten million million things lie beneath the ground, ready, and listening for the piping wind to give them release from their frozen state, that they may break out from the seed, bud and blossom, and bring forth fruit. And so, methinks, all the world around, where the Christian heaven has found its way, there are men who, by the great diffused providence of God, are taught self-denial, and faith, and hope, and patience, and kindness for others, and reverence for God; and though these things amount to very little as compared with higher developments, they are sufficient for germs; and they lie in the bud waiting for the influences that are to bring them forth.

It is my hope that the other life, which stands over against and above this, is to be a life in which men will find that their losses were no losses, that their imperfections were only relative to time, and that, according to their circumstances, placed where they were, they were all the while carrying up within themselves the elements of God. But to those to whom this life is all; to those who do not regard the other life as a compensation for this, or as its

complement; to those who do not understand that things which have their feeble beginnings here are carried out to their endings there—to such the mistakes of this life seem fatal. It is a comfort to believe that our mistakes in this world will have rectification in the world to come—as they will. Our successes are not so profitable to us as our mistakes; for successes generally promote pride and vanity, while mistakes promote humility. Mistakes make a man look back and see what he has been, what he has done, and what he has missed, and why he missed it. Mistakes are full of thought. The best things of our experience have come from the mistakes of life. Mistakes hatch wisdom. Successes hatch pride and vanity. All the inequalities of life, all its burdens, all the things which make men sigh, will, let us hope, be made right hereafter. Do you say, “The mysterious providence of God—I do not understand it?” What you understand not now, you shall understand by and by. The other life stands over against this, to catch it, and mold it, and supply what it lacks.

If these views are true, then I may say to all who are happy in this life, that their happiness should be to them a prophesy or revelation of the happiness they are to enjoy in the other life. There is no perfect joy, no joy worth speaking of, in this world. The joys that we have here are better than nothing; they are sufficient for the hour; but, after all, every noble nature feels that the sweet sounds of this life are but far-away, faint notes of the song that will be infinitely sweeter in the life which is to come. All heart-gladness here is a feeble attempt of nature to prophesy the gladness that rolls in choral grandeur above our heads in the sphere beyond. Happiness in this world ought not to root or anchor us here, to satisfy us here, or teach us to build our foundations here. We have here no continuing city. We seek one to come. By joy, by sorrow, by hope, by patient endurance, by looking up, by looking down, by all means, we are seeking “a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

These views come also to those who suffer affliction—and how many there are! If the roll were called, and if we could muster on some great plain all those who are sufferers; if we could draw out from their hidden recesses in society those who are endeavoring to hide their woes, what a strange army of men would be gathered! Those who are in bodily affliction; those who suffer in mind; those who are diseased in ten thousand ways in human life,—if all these should be gathered together, how few would be left behind! How vast would be the multitude!

Now, the Word of God declares that blood is the symbol of

perfectness; that by suffering we grow toward perfection; and that when Christ shed his blood for the remission of sins, he set forth, in glorious symbolism, the truth that the whole creation works upward largely by the attrition of suffering. Blood and death are not coarse and brutal things: they are symbols of a universal necessity. The whole creation groans and travails in pain until now, hoping for redemption. It is the travail of hope—not alone of sorrow. They who suffer without a heaven over their head, sodden, sagging down in despondency and despair—they are to be pitied. Suffering that has nothing except what is within the horizon; suffering that interprets nothing; suffering that inspires no faith, no yearning; suffering that demands no medicine from the heavenly land,—that is suffering which kills; and the sorrow which accompanies such suffering is ungodly and worldly. There is nothing so hardening as unspiritualized suffering; and there is nothing that is better for the soul, or more enriching, than suffering that drives a man away from earth, away from the conditions of this life as permanent conditions, away from relations that satisfy in this world, and compels him to look up to a larger manhood, to a more perfect fatherhood, and to the blessedness of that city which shall abide forever.

These thoughts come home to all who have faith in the external conditions of life; who do not think much about success; who are shiftless and useless, and yet often not in fault. Some men are born without nervous stamina, without the elements which prepare them for the conflicts of life; and they are whirled about and trampled upon by the strong. They are carried in eddies hither and thither. How many go along successfully a certain way in life, only to see their success overthrown! How many are prosperous until they are thirty, forty, fifty years of age, and then break down, their period having been run through, by their social connection with others, by some great convulsion, or by the working out of some vicious elements that were incorporated into their plan! They break down never to get on their feet again; and all the rest of their earthly existence is filled up with mere expedients to supply life from day to day. What miserable lives are theirs, if this life is all there is! But how different if men feel, "I was born into this world that I might prepare for the world that is to come, and I cheerfully go away from the success that I had almost reached, from wealth that seemed to be well-nigh in my possession, from enjoyments that were about to surround me. I have failed in the outward, but I have a city in which is no failure. I am a man, though I am not a

strong man. I have reason, and conscience, and hope, and trust. To my call come no flocks; I have no trumpet; my sword is broken in my hand; but I am a man, and God knows it, and I wait. My life lost? No; I am waiting to inherit my life. I have no abiding city here, but I am seeking one to come."

How blessed is the bankruptcy which stores the soul with such treasure! It is better for a man to live on faith and hope, to live on a contented trust in God, to live on a belief in the revelation of his true life in the world to come, than to be a merchant prince, with everything that the senses can want. Who are the successful men in life? Now and then there is a man that is successful both inside and outside. Now and then there is a man of great probity, of great generosity, of great goodness of inward nature, who yet is clothed with such physical and outward power that he is able to control the forces of outward greatness, and he stands eminent among his fellow-men; and everybody rejoices in him, because he has succeeded outwardly and inwardly too.

Underneath these, who are the elect, and of whom I am afraid there are not a great many in life, stand the two conspicuous divisions of men—those who succeed by the inside, and those who succeed by the outside.

Go into the great mart, where the cry of Mammon is, and look at those who are crowned with golden-leaved laurel; are they men in whose shoes you would stand, for all their money? Would you be cold of heart; would you be hard-hearted; would you be selfish to the last degree; would you be indifferent to your word and honor; would you live simply to heap store on store, ship on ship, house on house, lands on lands, funds on funds, for the sake of all the money that the globe could hold? There are such successful men. How many there are in New York whose foot-tread would shake the street! How many there are in that great city who have gathered together that **which** makes fools envy them, and whose living and dying affect the markets of the globe! How many men there are whose souls, if you were to look for them one moment after they had gone through the narrow gate, at which every man leaves everything physical behind him, you could not see on the other side,—so small, so poor, are they inwardly! A long life, and every virtue shrunk! A long life, with no goodness! A long life, with no generosity! A long life, with no honor! A long life, with no aspiration, no love of God, and no love to man, unless it be a various, overswollen love of self! How many there are whose life has been spent in weaving silk, cocoon-like, about their own selves! They lie down,

wound in that which came from their own bowels, and are worms inside.

On the other hand, how many are shifting houses from year to year, because they cannot pay so much rent! How many are going down step by step, and cannot bear the proud eyes of old associates! How many are selling what they have, little by little! How many tears are shed over the instrument of music which the child has so often fingered! How many sighs are uttered by the sweetest and noblest of mothers, who says, as it goes, "God bless the piano! May somebody's child have it that shall love it: it was my daughter's!" How many sadly unclasp from the wrist the memorials and gifts of love! How many reluctantly take the cherished ring from the hand! How many sit down, with nothing left, and wait? And how many persons pity them! And how pitiful they are, if they have nothing beyond and above this world! But if all these things work patience, and sweet content, and faith in God, and a certainty that the other life is the true life, and if men say, as their worldly treasures pass from them, "We have here no continuing city, but we seek one to come," how blessed, how rich they are! Herein we see the truth of Christ's words, "The last shall be first, and the first shall be last."

To all who find their days declining; to all upon whom age is creeping, with its infirmities; to all whose strength seems steadily to ebb; to all whose senses are failing; to all whose sight is going, and whose hearing is dull and heavy; to all, in other words, who find that their most precious gifts are being taken away from them, these views also come. God seems to take our last things, and, as it were, pack them up for our journey. And let every one, instead of mourning the white hair, the dim eye and the enfeebled hand, look at them in the light of prophecy. You have no continuing city here. These are tokens that you are approaching land. They are signs that the troubles of the sea are almost over.

After a weary voyage of twenty-one days on the *New World*, I awaked one morning, and descried afar off a blue, faint line on the horizon, and snuffed in the air a strange odor; and I said to Captain Knight—a grand and glorious fellow—"What is that?" "It is the land," said he. My tears overflowed. It was almost like being born again. The ocean was behind me; the land was close by; and the sweetest smell I ever smelled on earth was the ground smell that came up from old Ireland to me, as we drew near to the other side.

Blessed are they that know how to discern the signs and tokens

of their approach to the heavenly land ! These elements of decay are evidences that you are crossing the deep. The things that you will need are being folded up and laid away. You have here no farther use for them. It cannot be long, with your infirmities, before you will rise to a nobler possession. There stands He who is our Forerunner—Jesus the Mediator—the elder Brother.

Now listen to the glorious words which precede the text, in the chapter foregoing :

“ Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

Turn once more to that other triumphant language of inspiration :

“ Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

To that blessed land, by this tempestuous voyage, we are all drawing near. Some soon will be there ; sooner or later, all. By the grace of God, by the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, by hope and by trust, take hold of the blessedness of that life in such a way as that it shall bring down sweetness, and strength, and courage, and support to you in the toil, and the sins, and the besetments of this mortal life. And that we may do this, let us renew our courage, not only, but our love and our pledged fidelities to Him who is our life, and who will, when he appears, bring us with him—our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins, and ascended into heaven, to bring us to his Father’s house, where there are many mansions prepared for us.

So many as are present, and desire, this morning, to unite with us in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper ; so many as desire to do it because they are conscious of their need of God’s help by reason of their weakness and their transgressions ; so many as are willing to accept the Lord Jesus Christ, his love, his commands and his duties as the law of their life, and are willing to pledge fealty to him—all such I invite to tarry for a few moments, while we observe this Last Supper of our Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.*

OUR heavenly Father, we draw near to thee, knowing how much better thou art than the best among men; how much nobler as a parent; how much truer as a friend. Thou art unspeakably truer than the most true among men. Thou art infinite in all excellence. Not alone in thy wisdom, nor chiefly in thy wisdom, though this is supereminent over all thy works, do we behold thy greatness. We discern in the infinitude of thy mercy and thy goodness the depths and resources of thy nature. Where it will end, we know not. When the unfolding series and the long history will draw near to their completeness, we cannot understand. We are far from thee. We are coming near to thee, little by little. We belong to a race that is approaching thee. But where the end shall be, how far distant that future is when all the earth shall see thy salvation, we know not. Blessed be thy name that thou hast established a government, a providence, over men; that thou dost hear their cry; that thou art mindful of their needs; that thy heart is open; that thy thoughts are thoughts of mercy; that thou art boundless in thy kindness to them; yea, that thy very stripes and chastisements are administered in love; that thou dost inflict pain and bring forth joy; that out of darkness comes light; that by suffering thou art preparing a more glorious realm where tears shall be wiped away, and where sorrow and sighing shall flee forever.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, to grant that we may have patience. If we cannot discern, give us faith to believe, that thou art carrying forward thy great work over all the earth, and through all time. How poor we are! How feeble is our thought! With what slender grasp do we take hold of things which stretch out infinitely beyond our reach! Grant that we may have faith, not in our reason, not in the sight of what we see, but in the sense of the goodness of God; in the truth that we have thee. There thou standest, the everlasting One, with infinite resources, dwelling in eternity, unhastening; and bringeth forth, by degrees, through the ages, that consummation for which the whole creation has been groaning and travailling in pain until now.

We thank thee that thou art bringing so many to a personal knowledge of thee, through a sweet experience of faith in Jesus Christ. We thank thee for the blessedness of a knowledge of God in Christ Jesus. We thank thee for the opening of thine inward nature. We thank thee for that interpretation of thee which is vouchsafed to us through Christ. And we pray that we may not be afraid to put our trust in Him. May we not be afraid that thou wilt be jealous of the worship which is bestowed upon thy Son. Grant that he who thought it not robbery to be equal with God may receive honor, and glory, and thanksgiving; but, above all, may he receive love, which is the source of all praise, and honor, and glory, and thanksgiving; and may we rest in him.

Be thou, we beseech of thee, as an ark to us. May we fly unto thee from the overwhelming flood, and find ourselves upborne by thy strength; and in thy life may our lives be refreshed and renewed day by day.

Grant, we pray thee, thy blessing to rest upon thy dear servants who have been gathered, this morning, into the communion of this church, and into its fellowship. May they walk in the spirit of the Master. May they be living branches of a living vine, bringing forth much fruit.

Remember every one that belongs to this church. How many there are that are scattered from us! Some are in distant lands, wandering on errands of thy providence. Some are upon the sea. Some are in the wilderness.

* Immediately following the reception of members into the church.

Grant, wherever they may be, wide apart, that they may be near thee, and that thus through thee they may be near to each other.

If any are sick, wilt thou be gracious to them, and let the light of thy countenance cheer their darkness, and thy power strengthen their weakness, and thy love be as medicine for their souls.

Be near to any who are in trouble, and are bearing burdens. We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt sustain them in their trials, and bring them out into a large place, and establish their goings.

We beseech of thee that thy blessing may rest upon those who are enduring and suffering in behalf of the children that thou hast given them. May they be able so to trust thee that the work of rearing those children shall be a work of joy. And even if they find the toil and labor which thou hast granted them to be a task that demands wisdom and long patience, may they not be discouraged. How long hast thou borne with them! With what wisdom and patience hast thou taught them! And may they never despair, but bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And if those children, in later life, seem to depart from their instructions, may they still have faith, and by prayer hold to thy promises, and to their own hopes that God, peradventure, will bring back, even in the last hours, their lost ones.

We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt send thy blessing out into all the households that are connected with this congregation. We pray that every one of the families may have the light of thy presence. We beseech of thee that prayer may be heard in every household. May those that are walking in the sweet companionship of a higher life not fail, from day to day, to give light and joy to their affection by the invoked praise of their God and Saviour.

We pray for thy servants that, according to their strength and wisdom, are endeavoring to fulfill their duties. May they have more and more of that tenderness which was in Jesus Christ. May they have that earnestness and fidelity which are required by their high calling.

Grant, we pray thee, that those who preach the Gospel may preach it in sincerity and in truth. We pray that thou wilt teach men better and better how to preach; how to find the hearts of men; how to set in order the words of thy truth, so that men may discern the reasonableness of that to which they are called, and so that multitudes may enter the way of life.

We pray for the whole world, which thou hast promised shall be redeemed. Let the changes which are to take place follow each other speedily. Overturn and overturn till He whose right it is shall reign, when light shall come, and darkness shall flee; when joy shall appear, and sorrow shall depart; when true religion shall crowd out superstition; and when the whole earth shall be filled with thy salvation.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit. Amen.

THE TEMPORAL ADVANTAGES OF RELIGION.

“For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”
—1 Tim. iv. 8.

In the margin, the reading is, “Bodily exercise profiteth but for a little time; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

By *godliness* is understood, substantially, that which we mean by *religion*. It is that life which is prescribed for men by God. It is declared that a religious or godly life carries with it the best of this world, as well as of the world that is to come. It is profitable in “all things.” And in a time when a great many believe that religion is outworn; when men think it is a system of empty and dry mysteries; when they revile it as a concatenation of dogmas or metaphysical abstractions; when they see so much of disputation and so much of ill-feeling among religious people; when they see sects warring against sects; when, looking back upon the history of the Church, of embodied religion, they see what conflicts it has produced in the world; when they enter into the discussions that prevail upon the minute points, the ten thousand nothings, around which men with busy zeal buzz and burn; when they behold how much weakness is bred by sentiment turned into sentimentality; when they hear so many things advanced which are offensive to just reason, and subversive of it,—in such a time, it is not surprising that multitudes turn away without taking the trouble to discriminate. If you associate religion with any of its ordinary exponents; if your idea of it springs chiefly from the outward forms of churches, or from the conduct of imperfect, fallible men; if you look simply on its weaknesses, or on its incidental developments in

time, you will scarcely feel any movement toward faith, or any ardent desire to apprehend or embrace a religious life.

I will confess that there is much in the religious lives of men which is not attractive; that there are many persons called religious who are far from being truly religious; and that many who are truly religious do not know how to make religion beautiful. Frequently it is unpolished; it is rude; it is hard; it is a yoke that is not easy; it is a burden that is not light.

I propose, in the few remarks that I shall make this evening, to look at a religious life, not from a sectarian standpoint, or from doctrinal standards, but in its larger relations, and show that it is proper; that it is a thing to be desired by men both for this world and for the world that is to come.

The very first step in religion must needs have regard to our relation to a Superior Being. Every man who has a vivid conception of an overruling God fashions that conception himself. It is not possible that there should be impressed upon a man's mind, as with a stamp upon paper, a preconceived view of God. Whatever the parent teaches the child, the child is obliged to digest, fashioning it into some idea of its own. So that, while we are ourselves the work of God, it may be reverently said that God, as we think of him, is the work of our reason and of our imagination; that into that sacred name, into that circle which includes all wisdom and goodness, we put our highest conceptions of whatever is just, and true, and right, and beautiful, and to be desired. Every man forms the conception which he calls *God* out of his own best experiences or observations. And it may be said that the views of God which are held at any particular period represent the best ideals of the best men of that period.

Nor do I see how we can do better than this. Do you say, "This, after all, is fashioning an imperfect view"? But "who, by searching, can find out God"? How can finite minds know perfectly, understand correctly, things which transcend their sphere, being infinite? The limitations of the human condition are such that we cannot do otherwise, or better, than to form our own ideas of God in the way which I have described.

When men are in the primary stages of development, and are nearly animal, their gods are little more than gods of animal force. They are somewhat counsellors and governors; but mainly they are celestial despots. The gods of heathenism are generally passionai gods. But as society refines, its elements are transformed, and the conceptions of the divine nature are civilized. As society rises still higher, it has heroic elements; it has magnanimities in it; and

superlative justice begins to be known among men. Here and there is a mind of supreme stature. And from these suggestions in their fellows around about them, men rise to nobler and still nobler conceptions of the nature of God. And there is this to be said: that while, on the one side, we may suspect our very best conceptions of God to be much marred by limitations and misapprehensions, on the other side we have reason to believe that when we shall see him as he is, he will, in purity, in truth, in beauty, in desirableness, in all that is magnanimous and magnificent, be transcendently better than we think.

Now, it is not a thing to be despised, it is not a thing to be lightly set aside, or set aside philosophically—the hovering over the race of men, or over any individual man, from childhood to the end of life, the conception of an overruling God who represents the very best sides of the very best men. The most consummate ideal that men have ever known, or felt, or thought of, is the ideal of One who is supreme and sovereign, guiding nature, and in it providence, which is but another name for nature, specialized for certain social purposes.

Such a conception as this fills the future, and enlarges the horizon of existence. It gives value to trifles, and takes away from the ten thousand experiences of life that part of them which, under other circumstances, would be intolerable. It gives atmosphere, it gives perspective, it gives value to everything. I am speaking of it simply as an ideal conception of God, independent of the question of the direct inshining, the direct dynamic influence of the divine mind upon ours.

Next, in this line of thought, I mention religion as obedience to this God—an obedience that consists in conformity to all the laws of God by which we are surrounded, so far as they are known to us. He who obeys all God's known or knowable laws may be said to be a godly man.

There has been substituted for this,—and in disproportion, in excess,—the spirit of reverence, and of offering to God. But frequently and clearly in the Old Testament—and certainly abundantly in the New Testament—it is taught us that God does not so much desire flattery, or praise, or prayer, or sacrifices, or oblations, as he does justice, and mercy, and truth, and purity, and duty. And how often he repelled with indignation the old Jews who came to him with all obsequiousness! “I loathe your incense, and I despise your sacrifices,” he says. And Jesus says, “When thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift, and go thy

way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." In other words, "Do not come fawning to me, while you refuse to fulfill the social duties that are near to you, and are known to you ; as if anything that you could give to me would please me. I am best pleased when I see you right-minded, when I see you doing justly, when I see you acting honorably. Go, perform your moral duty, and then, out of a heart that is consciously allied to me, love me, and give testimony of your love." To obey the known laws by which we are surrounded, recognizing the fact that these laws are but so many embodiments of the divine law, and that therefore they are expressions of God's thought and will and purpose—this is religiousness.

He that obeys all the laws that surround him is not a superstitious man—need not be—ought not to be. The laws of nature, which touch the soul ; the laws of society, in a secondary sense, so far as they are found by human experience to be indispensable,—are divine. All the laws of our condition are but so many representations of the mode in which God meant man to live, and to develop himself in life ; and a conscientious and trustful and hopeful and joyous obedience to all these laws is godliness.

I am better pleased to see my children act right than I am to hear them lavish epithets of tenderness upon me. "Oh, my beloved father!"—what is that to me from a boy that will not fulfill my wishes ? "Oh, my best beloved!"—what is that from a daughter that disobeys my commands, and substitutes self-will for obedience to those commands ? It is not he that says the most prayers ; it is not he that says, "Lord, Lord" : it is he that doeth the will of my Father, that is accepted of God. And religion consists in doing the will of God. And that will is made known more plainly by the laws that surround us than by any other elements of life.

There is a view of this subject that is worthy of a moment's consideration. The school of Rousseau went back to what is called a state of nature, as to a state of simplicity and happiness, of liberty and moral perfection ; and taught that as men became entangled in the complexity of what are called the artificial conditions of society, they were more and more in bondage in consequence of the multiplication of laws and customs. Now, I aver that a man opens up, and is free, just in the proportion in which he obeys laws. A man who disobeys laws is like one who attempts to travel through a wilderness in which no paths have been cut ; but a man who follows laws—divine laws—natural laws—is like one who traverses a turnpike that has been opened up and prepared for him. His mind is no longer burdened, and his

eye is no longer weary, with seeking a way. The moment he strikes the road his movement is facilitated ; he is relieved of anxiety and care, and he can give himself to other thoughts. He is assisted at every step. Obedience to law is the method by which our faculties are quick in their just action ; and true obedience is true liberation. If, on the other hand, a man is hurt, hampered, cramped, it is because there is some law which he perpetually disobeys. No man knows what liberty is except the man who has found out the laws which belong to each faculty, and the several conditions in which they are to be exercised, and gives himself cheerfully and fully to them.

While in a community, in a household, or in a church, there may be laws imposed that are purely arbitrary, burdensome, and needless, and that may tax one's time and perplex one's attention. This cannot be true in respect to any divine—any great and real—laws. These never burden nor tax men. A man is required, it is true, to rouse himself up to learn them, and, it may be, to discipline himself to obey them ; but just so soon as he begins to obey God's laws, that moment he begins to have more personality and more power. By losing his life, it is said, he shall save it. By giving up self, you gain self. By asking "Which is the way?" and walking therein, you walk with increased strength.

To know the laws of God, and to obey them, as expressions of the divine will, with cheerfulness, with filial love and trust—this is religiousness of the highest description ; and in this lies all profit, all strength, all liberty, all happiness. No man is so happy as he who is fulfilling known laws.

Next, I may mention the benefit of self-denial—the very thing that men dread in religious life, and yet one of the best things in it. In his natural state, every man is a commonwealth in anarchy. We have been most richly endowed. Layer upon layer of faculties ; all the powers that stand related to the physical globe ; the lower range of sympathies ; the appetites and passions, which are most beneficent if kept within due bounds ; the super-incumbent affections ; and those still higher developments, the moral sentiments, which take hold, finally, upon the spiritual world itself.—these many parts quarrel among themselves, unless they are taught and disciplined. And this has been the burden of both poets and moralists from the beginning : "That which my reason approves, my passions refuse. I perceive the good, but I pursue the evil. The flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."

Now, there must be, in some way, instituted in every man's mind a settlement, a compromise. There must be a gradation,

and a subordination, of some of the faculties. There must be a government set up in a man's soul which shall bring all the parts of his nature into harmonious relations. This is done by what is called *self-denial*. It is brought about by the ascendancy of a moralized reason. It is accomplished by the subjection of that which is essentially fleshly to that which is essentially spiritual. So that where a man denies himself, it is only his lower self that he denies, and he denies it for the sake of his higher self. It is the reason that claims authority, and the passions are denied that the reason may have its way. It is the conscience that demands to be heard; and whatever is rude, unjust, and selfish, is obliged to succumb that conscience may dominate. It is the sense of kindness that requires cruelty to vacate the throne, and no longer crave the suffering of its victims. Whatever in man is animal, selfish, proud, hard and unjust, must subordinate itself to that which is pure and true and equitable and godly.

This process by which a man's lower nature is perpetually brought into subjection to his higher nature is what is meant by *self-denial*, or *taking up the cross*. It is the principle of obedience established between the inferior and the superior, the superior having a right to dominate over the inferior. That is what is meant when you are commanded to begin a religious life, and take up the cross. It is not meant that you are to stand up in the church and make a confession of your faith, as if that were a cross. Doing this may be a cross under some circumstances; but the particular cross which a man takes up when he becomes a religious and Christian man, is that of bringing his worldly nature, his fleshly propensities, into subjection to his reason, his conscience, and his spiritual affections. It is an inward cross that he is to take up. He is to subordinate that which is inferior to that which is superior.

Now, "godliness is profitable" in this. Is it profitable to have your piano out of tune, so that there are no two notes in any of the octaves on the whole key-board that are at peace? Is it a hard thing to have that instrument brought into tune? If you hear its wailings it seems very hard, but it is not. Every single chord that is being screwed up and brought into unison with some central point or pitch, is working toward harmony, sweetness, and musicalness.

And is it not good that the soul should be tuned? that the sub-base, the base, the tenor, and all the higher ranges of notes should be brought into relations with each other, so that from the top to the bottom the whole shall be in harmony? And by what principle is this done? By the principle of subjection, by the principle of gra-

dation, as established by God in nature, as discovered by reason, and as abundantly illustrated in Scripture, which contains the sublimest reasoning in spiritual things that was ever known in this world.

When, therefore, I call men to a religious life, and say, "You must practice self-denial," I do not know that religion demands it more than anything else; but it demands it better. No man can live and not deny himself. A wicked man denies himself. A lazy man denies himself. A glutton denies himself. Everybody denies himself. The question is, whether it shall be done according to the principle that God lays down, by which you will have the liberty, the co-ordination, and the co-operation of every part of the mind; or whether it shall be done partially, and for low and really selfish purposes.

I argue the reasonableness of the Christian religion in nothing more than in the recognition of the necessity of obedience to law; the recognition of the importance of the gradation of the faculties of a man's soul; the recognition of the essential subordination of the lower parts of a man's nature to the higher parts. And it is this obedience, this gradation, this subordination that constitutes self-denial in religious life.

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

When the bullock is first yoked up, the yoke is not easy, and it makes his neck sore, because he has not learned to wear it; but as soon as he has learned, it is easy. What colt in the wilderness is worth anything on whose back no saddle has rested, and whose skin no harness has ever touched? When is a steed in his glory? When he has been taught to use his capacities to the best advantage; when he has been broken in, in order that he may break out; when he has been subdued, in order that he may be mightier; when he is kept under, in order that he may lift himself infinitely superior to what he otherwise could have been.

No man is such a conqueror as the man who has defeated himself. No man is such a sovereign as the man who has put himself under.

You will not be surprised, then, when I say, having proceeded thus far, that a religious life is one which implies, or demands, the highest elements of reason. I do not say that the highest exercise of reason is compatible with the state at which religion finds men in the beginning; but I do say that a system of religion which is true to God and nature is one that unfolds the reason more and more;

that employs it, that appeals to it, that educates it. And among the different sects, the presumption is that those who unite the highest degree of purity and disinterestedness with the most eminent intellectual tendencies, are the most nearly orthodox—if God is orthodox. The reason is, as it were, God enthroned in the soul.

Not that reason is sufficient ; but reason is much misapprehended. Its nature, its method, its operation are not understood. If I sit and think abstractly and purely, confining myself simply to the process of thought, I come short of knowledge. Reason alone cannot teach my affection to reason. Magnetized and colored by affection, reason becomes intuitive, and is almost a certain teacher. No man, by the reason alone, can understand music ; but if the musical faculty be in the soul, and if it lend its color and influence to the reason, then the reason, acting in conjunction with the musical faculty, becomes a more perfect teacher. No man without conscience can spell out the truths of conscience by pure and simple reason ; but when the moral faculty is joined to the intellectual, then the intellectual, struck through by the colors of the moral, becomes a true and just interpreter.

Men are afraid of reason, and they say, “Are we not in danger of running into error by relying upon our reason?” Yes, if you mean abstract reason, we may be in danger. Men say, “Reason leads to science, and science to materiality, and materiality to annihilation, and annihilation to pantheism, and pantheism to atheism.” They say that we are to choose between reason and the individual and collective testimony of the Church ; and that if we choose reason, we go away from religion toward materiality, and ultimately toward atheism. But I aver, on the other hand, that a true reason, acting with the affections, is constantly tracing its deductions up through our relations in life, and bringing them to bear upon our experience in religious affairs. Reason is a permanent blessing of God to the soul. Without it, there can be no large religion. Without it, religion is very little better than a superstition. With it, religion grows deeper, broader, richer, more unfailing. It emancipates man. It gives him the power of standing erect, no longer a crouching creature, no longer a worm ; but a son of God, a prince.

The opposition that is made between faith and reason, I disown. By *faith*, I understand simply the belief in things not visible to the senses. It is a supersensuous reason. It is the action of the mind on things that do not present themselves to the outward senses—on moral qualities. No man ever saw heroism ; but every man has seen persons acting under its inspiration. No man ever saw virtue ;

but every man knows there is such a thing. No man ever saw genius; but every man believes there are persons endowed with genius. There are various phenomena which cannot be seen, but whose effects are seen when they are set in operation. There are many truths which are recognized, though they are neither material nor tangible nor visible.

In its most comprehensive definition, then, *faith* is the sense of truths or things which do not present themselves to the outward mind. The apostle says,

“Faith is the evidence of things not seen.”

There you have it. Two thousand years before we were so witty or wise as to discover it, faith was declared to be “the evidence of things not seen.” Faith is a belief of things which are not recognized by a man’s eyes, ears, nose, mouth, or hand. In other words, moral qualities, spiritual existences, the higher realms of truth, we do not submit to the coarser analysis which belongs to materiality. And how men can say that faith is opposed to reason in such relations, I cannot understand. I have to use my reason for the sake of faith. No man can have faith who does not first have reason. If my priest says to me, “You must have faith so and so,” I must think about it, and think about it, before I can have faith. What I take by faith my reason must interpret. Reason is indispensable to faith.

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.”

God, that made the eye, shall he not see? God, that made the ear, shall he not hear? And God that distinguished man by such enlargement of intelligence, the germs and glimpses of which we see in the brute creation; God, that more widely enlarged the door of man’s moral nature, and set reason to shining in the lighthouse on the sea of the passions, as a bright and morning star—shall he not accept reason? Does he fear it, or despise it? He encourages it. His commandments are so many appeals to reason. They are based upon it. Paul says,

“I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

It is reasonable.

It may be that our reason cannot master all the facts connected with a truth; but we shall understand them better and more fully than if we had no reason. We shall continually meet things which we cannot explain or understand; but the general truth in religious life is this, that he who has the largest use of reason may be the best religious man. That is, there is no interpreter like reason.

Reason tends to religiousness, and so to godliness, if it be rightly employed. It gives us right ideas, and keeps the great concave above full of hope and expectancy. It brings us into the liberty of obedience to great natural laws. It teaches us to subordinate our outward nature to our inward nature. It enfranchises the understanding, and brings daylight to the soul.

Under such circumstances, I need not say that if a man has learned, in following God, and his commands, and the light of reason, to control himself, and walk in divinely appointed paths, it is fair to expect that this religious and godly life will lead to worldly thrift— notwithstanding that there are, seemingly, so many expressions in the New Testament of the contrary sort. We are to remember that the weather which prevails when the winter is breaking up, when March rules, is not necessarily the weather which is to prevail through all the growing season. When the apostles were breaking away from the turmoils of Judaism, when persecution was let loose, when revolutions were making the whole earth quake, the facts which existed in respect to godliness and right-living were not such as were to characterize all the subsequent ages of the world. It was true then that men would often be obliged to accept poverty. It was true that men would often be obliged to forsake their homes. It was true that men would often be obliged to sacrifice domestic affections. And it is true that, in certain exigencies, men may be obliged to do these things now; but these things are not necessarily a part of religion. Patriotism may not be a part of religion. Where the Scriptures speak of the barrenness of life, and the sacrifices in life, they refer to local exigencies. There is no essential condition of godliness in large and continuous operations which tend to thrift. They may tend to a man's destruction as much as the exercise of belluine passions. And religion is a restraint on a man's passions and appetites, and so promotes his prosperity. Religion obliges a man to think forward, and guard his movements; and in this way tends to make him more thrifty. There is nothing more damaging to a man's prosperity in this world than an indiscreet greediness which inclines him to grasp after more things than he can manage, or to grasp after things faster than he can manage them. Religion says,

"Let your moderation be known unto all men."

Restrain all your desires. Curb your passions and appetites. Practice self-government.

Where, in communities, you find the truest form of regulated religion, there you are most likely to find the largest amount of thrift. There is no class of persons known that are more eminent in

their obedience to natural laws than our friends the Quakers ; and it is the testimony of all the world that there is no class that are so thrifty as they. Meekness, gentleness, abstinence from the exercise of force one toward another ; the arbitration of everything according to the rules of right ; regulated industry ; frugality ; justice between man and man,—these are their daily instructions, and they accord with their usual conduct. The consequence is that their barns burst with fullness ; their presses overflow ; they have more than heart can wish ; and abundance is theirs, for generous sparing to those who lack.

Morality, then, tends to thrift—the higher forms of morality—especially that morality which takes on spirituality : so much so, that if a man is a large owner of real estate, and wants to sell his property, he says, “I don’t believe in the Bible ; I have no faith in what they call religion ; but churches bring the best people into a neighborhood.” Where a man is engaged in a real estate speculation, he likes to see a church go up. A shrewd worldly man, judging purely from selfish considerations, bears testimony that the men who cluster about churches are generally thrifty ; are generally fore-handed ; are generally enterprising. On the other hand, the men who spend their Sundays in grogshops ; the men who go roistering about the streets ; the men who sing coarse songs, and swear, and drink,—are those the men that real estate owners want when they are starting a new neighborhood ? They may like to go with these men ; they may join with them in railing against religion ; but after all, when you bring them to the test, they are not the class of men that they want, to give success to a real estate speculation. When it comes to the foundation of things, they want men that are self-governed ; men that are inspired by higher ideals than passion and appetite. They have a continual sense that the very men whom they call hypocrites, are men who, by reason of virtue, morality, or something of the sort, are thrifty, fore-handed, prosperous men.

“Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

I do not mean that every man is godly in proportion to his riches, nor do I mean that every man who is thrifty is therefore religious ; because we are living together in society, and the qualities of one man reflect themselves on another. A wise father and mother will rear seven or eight fools in a family, and they will come up very well. I do not mean absolute idiots, but simple-minded and unthrifty children. You often find that very ordinary children are carried respectably through life by the transmitted influence of their parents and their social surroundings. The godliness

that is embodied in households, institutions, laws and customs, holds up men that are personally and individually weak. It is imputed to them for righteousness. It passes over to them. And so a man may be prosperous, though he be worldly. He may rise by reason of the reflected influence of other men on him. But generally the proposition is true, that where you find the most religion there you will find the most worldly prosperity—in communities, I mean ; not in single persons. And you will find that communities which are regulated by moral influence, and in which animalism is put down by spirituality, are communities of enlightened reason, where the conscience is dominant, and seeks to conform itself to the laws of God.

I may mention one other consideration—namely, that in this life men, while they are perpetually achieving success, are far from being happy. There are men whose vineyards bear abundant clusters, but who do not know how to make wine out of them. Or, to drop the figure, men live in this world, and attain success in a great variety of directions, but do not know how to manufacture happiness out of it. How is it? What is the matter? Why are not men happy? What is it that distresses them? How large an element of care enters into common life! How large an element of discontent! How large an element of fear! How large an element of greediness! How dissatisfied men are because their success is not so large as they desire! How much envy and jealousy there are among them! One looks out of his palace, and sees other palaces going up that are finer than his, and that are owned by men who own more than he does; and though he has more than heart could wish, he loses the flavor of his own affairs because somebody has more property than he. And so, with unsatisfied ambition, with over-greediness, with complaining discontent, and with narrow selfishness, men are perpetually cutting themselves, as the old heathen did in their worship. So men, by care, by envy, by the malign passions, are taking away the flavor of true content from themselves. Men seldom have peace in this great discordant world. In the din and rush of human life you can seldom find peace.

In the battle of Gettysburg, while a thousand cannon shook the hills and the whole heaven quivered with reverberations, during a moment's pause, in a cemetery, a sparrow sang sweetly out from a beach-tree which was growing there. When the cannon again uplifted their voice, the sparrow was silent; but it sang at every pause. And what that sparrow's voice was amid the wild roar of war, that is peace in the discord, discontent and din of human life. A single

voice is now and then sweetly singing out of the midst of content ; but nowhere do you hear choirs of voices singing peace. There is no widespread expression of happiness heard ; and there is no abiding peace.

What has left those marks on your brow ? It is anxiety ; it is fear ; it is ill-fated desire. These are the signatures on the human face. Suffering and anxious care are written there.

Now, it is the peculiar office of religion to teach us the overruling providence of God. Not that there is any special favoritism , not that God undertakes to inject upon the regular economy which he has introduced into the world any special favors ; but that the whole economy of nature is under the control of God, and that God has the same power of using natural laws that man has.

By a wise knowledge of laws, and by a judicious following of them, I can make my house shine with joy ; I can make my winter hearth cheerful ; I can make my summer hall cool ; I can perfume my garden with flowers ; I can make my orchard hang lush with golden fruit ; I can make my farm yield abundant harvests ; I can bring up my children to industry ; I can make the difference between their being castaways and eminent citizens. By a wise knowledge and use of natural law I can change the fate of the village ; I can change the destiny of states ; I can change the facts of the time. That which distinguishes man from the brute is his power, in dealing with nature, to milk her laws, and make them give forth their bounty.

And shall not God know how to do it ? Shall I have that eminent power, and shall God be without it ? When I preach the providence of God, I preach a providence, not that sets aside natural law, but that employs those processes which are consistent with natural law. I learn to use natural laws from my God, and he can use them better than I can. There is an overruling providence, such that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice. All the things that have to do with the family of man are noted by God ; not alone the things which relate to the Church, but the things which relate to the poor Hottentot, and the Caffre, and the wandering Indian of the pampas. There is not a creature that has the seed of immortality in him, that God does not see and care for. We cannot understand a Being who is large enough to be competent to such vast detail ; but the idea of such a Being is only an extension of that which we know, in small, to be the complex power with which intelligent men comprehend the affairs of life, and which is a sufficient hint to enable us to form some conception of the possibility of a Being who can carry the whole world in his thought

easily and naturally, and so control natural laws that men may trust him and rest on him.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." "Cast thy burden on the Lord." "Take no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."

So the great fertile cause of discontent may be removed, by a childlike faith in God, who is sovereign in his providence, and who cares for all mankind.

The time would fail me to enter at large upon the other points which I have marked for the evening's discussion; but I will speak of one other single element, and that is the light which true godliness throws upon declining years, and upon the great fact of transition which men call death. There is nothing more feared, and nothing that should be less feared, than this. If death be the coming of the Son of Man (and as such it is steadily and beautifully spoken of in the New Testament); if it is but falling asleep in Jesus; if it is the harvest hour when men are gathered, as the Old Testament expresses it, "like a shock of corn" fully ripe; if it be the taking of men to their fathers,—if this be death, need we look farther than that to find that it is emancipation; to find that it is to us like the casting off of the bark of a tree? If dying is to us what the breaking of the shell is to the bird, or what the swelling of the kernel is to the seed; if dying is planting here that we may live there, in a higher state—then may it please God to call us home. If dying is a breaking of the bonds which constrain us in this life; if it be release; if it be larger liberty; if it be more glorious aspiration; if it be faith—and it is—is it not worth our while to have that belief? The fears of death that goad men; those absurd terrors which have, by ignorant hands, been thrown around about the final home; those gorgon, hideous phantasms with which the closing scenes of life have been invested,—how are all these driven away, as fog, and mist, and smoke, and dust, by the outshining of the God of love! Dying? What says the hymn concerning it?

"Shall aught beguile us on the road,
When we are walking back to God?
For strangers into life we come,
And dying is but going home."

How blessed is living to those who are not afraid to die? How blessed is dying to those who are tired of living—yea, and if they be not tired! Out of a charmed group of children; out of the harvest-field of purposes ripening for the sickle; out of the myriad endearments of life, if one have but an enfranchised eye and a cleansed imagination, how glorious it is to step from joy to joy, and from glory to glory!

This is the religion to which I call you. I preach no superstition. I appeal to no base passions, and to no unmanly fear—though fear is not always unmanly. I preach to you God, transcendently the noblest and best. I preach to you the commandments of God, which are just and true. I preach to you a religion of self-restraint and of self-control. I preach to you a religion of obedience. I preach to you a religion of hope, of love, of trust, and of victory—victory first over life, then over self, and then over death, with which comes the crown of immortality.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE implore thy benediction, our Father. We do not draw near to solicit as from one who is unwilling; nor do we bring to thee the tidings of unexpected trouble. Before we knew ourselves, our rising wants were ever provided for. Thine ordinance is in nature. The sun is thy messenger. The year speeds its rounds of mercy in obedience to thy commands; and in the air, in the sea, upon the land, and in all the places of thy dominion, thou hast appointed those laws and those economies which are filled with treasure; so that every sense is met, and every faculty is blessed from day to day. Our growing wants find an ever-ready treasury. The whole earth is filled with thy goodness. Why, then, should we implore thy benediction? We are surrounded by mercies more than we recognize. Yea, by thy gifts often thou art thyself hidden. We beseech of thee that we may understand more and more the mystery of the goodness of God; the endless munificence of him who is offended by our transgression and takes no offense; who is wounded by our unbelief, and yet is forever healing us of unbelief. We bless thee that thou hast made it our privilege, as well as our duty, to draw near in prayer, and take the things which are already proffered. So in asking, our souls are doubly blessed. So everything received in prayer becomes a gift of God to us. So the light of thy countenance, the joy of thy heart, is imparted even to the commonest things of life.

And now, Lord, we thank thee for all the way in which we have been led through the years that are gone by. We thank thee for all the mercies which we have seen following the labors we have been permitted to participate in. We thank thee for all the grace which has been made manifest toward us; for the succor which has been vouchsafed to us in times of distress; for strength in times of weakness; for listening to our petitions when all other cries came back to us fruitless and in vain.

We rejoice, O Lord our God, that thou hast been constant; that though invisible, thou hast always been present; that though without voice, thou hast forever been speaking to us. We rejoice in the experience of thy love and goodness; and we desire, by the mercies of God, and by the memory of all his loving-kindness, now to consecrate ourselves to his service, which is reasonable. We desire to yield up soul and body to thee, in obedience to thy laws, in the furtherance of thy good pleasure. And we pray that we may be enlightened more perfectly, day by day, and know the way of righteousness, and walk therein more firmly, and bring forth more abundantly those fruits of the soul in which thou art well pleased.

We pray that thou wilt grant to all who are present to-night a sense of the divine presence. May there be that in the heart of every one which

shall make him understand that God is with him. May every one feel that he is known by name, and by disposition, and in all his circumstances, by the blessed Saviour. We pray that every one may be able to venture upon Christ. May every one hear his call, and come to him, and take his burden and his yoke, and realize the truth of all his promises. We pray, O Lord, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all who are in trouble; all who are vexed with sore distress; all who are weighed down with goading cares; all who are prostrated by disappointments; all who are mourning in deep bereavement; all who are suffering from fear or remorse or guilty mistakes.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt be a Savior to every soul. Deliver each one from his own special trial. Manifest thyself to each as his God and Saviour.

We beseech of thee that it may not be in vain that we put our trust in thee. May we grow strong by confidence from day to day, as we realize the constancy of thy character since thou dost verify every word of thy promise as it stands before us, yea and amen. Grant that our trust in God may work in us more and more trust in days to come. May we learn by experience, at last. May we walk no longer by sight. May we henceforth walk by faith.

We pray, O God, that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the families that are represented here. According to their several circumstances bless them abundantly by thy Spirit and by thy providence. Remember all that are away from us. Cherish them, and defend them, and bring them back again, if that be thy righteous will. And grant, we pray thee, that all those that are upon the sea, and all those who are in distant lands, and all those who are scattered every whither, may come up in remembrance before thee, as our hearts remember them.

And we pray for thy blessing to rest upon thy people of every name; upon all thy churches and ministering servants. Spread abroad the truth and knowledge of God as it is in Christ Jesus. And we pray that thy kingdom may come, and that all the evils which are thwarting the advance of righteousness may be taken out of the way. May light take the place of darkness, and knowledge supplant ignorance, and true faith drive superstition forth from the world. Let the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and may he reign from the rising of the sun till the going down of the same.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and ever. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt let the light of thy truth shine more and more clearly. Cleanse us of all our misinterpretations; and may the words of the prophets, the words of the holy men of old, come down to us, that we may read them, in our own tongue, verified by our own experience, enlarged and enlightened by the inshining of the Holy Spirit. Grant that we may have such communion with thee that the light of our understanding shall be the light of thine. May we think in thee. May we live in thee. May we rejoice in thee.

Bless us, we beseech of thee, as we go hence to our duties during the week. Fortify us against every fear. Strengthen us in things good. Enlarge our views, and lead us to thee. Grant us thine own unspeakable mercies, according to the goodness that is in thee, and not according to the goodness that is in us. And finally, give us the rewards of the heavenly estate. And to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit shall be praise everlasting. *Amen.*

SALVATION BY HOPE.

“For we are saved by hope.”—Rom. viii. 24.

The apostle adds,

“Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

In his mind there seems to have been a thought of the great other life—of its magnificence; of its glory; of its beauty; of its desirableness. It was not visible, except to the inward sight. It was not tangible. It was to be reached by the principle of hope. It was to be made valuable in the struggle which every man who leads a life according to a high Christian ideal is obliged to maintain. And out of that great future there came to him, as in every age there come to all of God’s servants, sources of strength and courage, so that he was able to endure the utmost stress of sadness.

“Now, all this is not singular,” he says. “You are not called to a life of hope by considerations that are present and visible; by immediate victories; by anything so tangible that the eye can see it. If you saw these things, they would be present to you; but the operation of hope is always toward the future.”

It is the principle by which we discern things to come, in an expectant and cheerful life. If the elements of the future life were present, there would be no office for hope. We hope when the things which we contemplate are beyond our sight. Hope is the power of perceiving and appropriating good—good that lies beyond; good that, either far or near, is still out of the present, in the future.

Hope is not simple foresight; neither is it simple expectation: because the foresight may be of evil, and the expectation may be of mischief. Hope always has cheer and comfort in it, because it con-

fines itself to that which men desire. We never hope for misery ; we never hope for mistakes ; we never hope for pain. We hope for victory ; we hope for coronation ; we hope for love and joy ; we hope for the restoration, in the other sphere, of all the things which have been broken or scattered in this.

So hope has this distinctive peculiarity, that it is sweet-minded and sweet-eyed. It draws pictures. It weaves fancies. It fills the future with delights. And then, having created them by the assistance of the imagination, it brings them near, and in some sense appropriates them. That is to say, it gives to the present hour consolation, drawn from the expectation of things that are to come.

The greatest architect, and the one most needed, is Hope. It is the greatest builder ; and it builds with the flimsiest material—the fancy. Castles, mansions, gardens, lands, sweet delights, it builds beyond the flood. Ten thousand portraits does it paint, all forms of society does it picture, all events does it bring forth, in the mind. And there is that in hope which, though it knows these all to be creatures of our own conceit, still cheers and comforts us by the operation of elements which spring thus from our minds.

Now, the Christian religion stands contrasted with all other faiths by the superabundant elements of cheer and hope and comfort that are in it. He who represents the Christian faith in any other light than that of sweet beauty, and joyous hopefulness, misunderstands and misrepresents it.

In the Old Testament day, there was a certain element of hope ; but it was undeveloped, and there was a vague anticipation of some future glory on earth to the Church, and the sympathy of the patriarchs with the cause of righteousness led them to rejoice in it. Although there is in the Old Testament no explicit teaching of the life to come (singular as that fact is), though there is not in the whole of the Mosaic writings a single didactic or dogmatical promise of immortality, though neither heaven nor hell was taught as an article of belief, yet there is evidence that these ideas had been developed, and the worthies of the world had more or less light upon or faith in futurity, and that light grew more and more as time went on. But hopefulness was deficient. They lived in the present. They said, “This do, and live.” They pointed to the round of duties which belonged to each day, saying, “Perform all these services and ceremonies, and God shall be well pleased.”

The Christian religion goes much farther. Although it recognizes instrumentalities, it regards them as mere servants ; and it constantly puts emphasis on the end, in this life, of fashioning a

new manhood, and represents the other life as the great sphere into which all the streams of this are entering. Here, we lay the foundation ; there, we build the superstructure. Here, we make acquaintances ; there, we form indissoluble friendships. Here, all is rudimentary ; there, things come to fruit and ripeness.

The Christian faith is forever looking forward, and cheering men, during their sojourn here below, in their discomforts, and cares, and burdens, by this perpetual vision of the future, in which is so much promise ; in which so much is stored up ; toward which the present has such continual tendencies, and with which it has such vital relationships.

If you contrast the Christian faith with the faiths of the heathen, rather than with the Hebrew faiths, the contrast is still greater. The heathen religions were mostly religions of fear. To a small extent they were religions of conscience. The ethical principle of religion was late in being born. For ages and ages, religion was one thing, and ethics were another. The religion of the heathen had no important connection with ethics ; so that a man might be a very religious man, and yet be wicked and criminal,—the one not going with the other, and the one not being considered evidence of the other.

If you go back to the records of antiquity, certainly among many nations—notably among the Tuscans of Italy—we find that the element of fear predominated. There were no ethical treatises, there was no system of religion among them : all we have by which to judge of them is their art. Archaeologists tell us that, of all the memorials which remain of the old Tuscans, there is not one emblem of hope ; that there is not on the fragments of their works of art, nor among the inscriptions on their tombs, one pleasant picture of victory or faith ; that every single one of their figures or illustrations represents gross elements of fear or horror ; that all their pictures which depict dying, or futurity, are pictures of gorgons—hideous creatures of the imagination.

Over against such brutal faiths, the Christian faith stands up, the bright image of the Sun—the Day-Star—the Sun of Righteousness.

Hope is a distinct and peculiar faculty. It is one of the original attributes of mankind. Like all other faculties, it exists with different degrees of power in different persons. Some have a genius for hope. We call them *sanguine*, their temperament being supposed to have much to do with the flow of the blood. Physiologists have designated the different temperaments of men with reference in part to their mental peculiarities.

We all discern the difference between men. Some live by the

power of conscience. Duty, *duty*, DUTY, is their watchword. Some live and work by the power of caution, apprehension, solicitude, constant grinding anxiety. Others are cheerful and expectant. They sing all day, and would sing all night, if they were awake. It is their nature. There are many men who, if you bend them down to the ground, break short off at the stump. There are other men who, if you bend them down to the ground, are like the young hickory. The moment the pressure is removed, they spring back again, and are as straight as ever. Many men are subtle, facile; forever, and under all circumstances, rejuvenating themselves. There is an element of hope in them. To be sure, yesterday was disastrous; but to-day has come. To be sure, to-day is dark; but it will clear off before to-morrow. To be sure, this has miscarried; but no matter, begin again.

Hope is a charming trait in men. There is something very admirable in conscientiousness; in its depths; in its endurance; in the acceptance of unwelcome labor and duty which it carries with it. There is also in the stringency of fear much that is to be admired. It carries with it great activity and intense provocation. But, after all, commend me to the sweetness and the inspiration of hope. Men who have this faculty largely developed, though they have but little education, are children of the daylight. They are perpetually alive to that which is sweetest and best in life.

It is true that hope itself has its own peculiar dangers. The whole generation of what are called *schemers* are children of hope. They are not balanced by suitable caution, reflection, and development. Schemers are pioneers of success. We always laugh at them, and never recognize how much we are under obligation to them.

If you are starting in an unknown channel, you are not glad of any mishap to him that goes ahead of you; but if he run upon a sandbank he is a buoy for you, and you do not go there; and if another strike some obstacle on the other side, you take note of him, and avoid that obstacle. You profit by the misfortunes of the two men, and go between them. You take the channel which they both meant to take, but missed.

The men who go ahead concoct new schemes, seeking something better, laying the foundation for valuable results, though they do not reap them. To be sure, the inventor, in his day, received nothing from his invention; but then, that invention bore fruit in another man's hand a little later.

Here is a man that sought some public improvement. For thirty years he has talked about it, and labored for it; and nothing

came of it during his life-time ; but when he died, somebody else got the proceeds of his efforts.

It is the function, then, of schemers to go ahead ; to be pioneers ; to find new paths ; to break up the wilderness ; to prepare the way for those who come after them. We speak of them slightly ; we crown their memories with contempt, almost ; we say of them, " Well, they had no ballast ; they never succeeded." If success means to freight one's own pockets, they did not succeed ; but if a man has succeeded whose life has been a benefit to his fellow-men, whether it has benefited him personally or not, then they did succeed.

A man made an invention. He never got a dollar out of it. Indeed, he lost all he had in developing it. But it was a blessing to others.

Goodyear, of excellent memory and name, spent many weary years, and all his property, in the consummation of the discoveries which have blessed, economically, the whole world. Fortunately, during the last years of his life, he reaped some advantage from them. But suppose he had died without making a dollar ; would he have lived in vain ? He would have left the fruit of his thought, and he would not have lived in vain.

A man invents that which economizes force and multiplies comfort among the mass of men. The fruit of it slips out of his hand. Well, what then ? " Ah ! " people say, " so it is with the world." The men who think, and the men who create, are always thrown into the background, and the unworthy come forward and take the result of their living."

Woe to that man who feels that he has lived right only when he has lived to please himself. Blessed is that largeness of mind and heart which enables a man to say, " I have not shaken the tree, but I have planted the tree which other men shall shake. I have not dwelt in fair mansions ; but I have laid the foundations, and done the work underground, which other men shall build up and complete. I have never been able to reap a harvest, but I have sown seed where no man had wrought before."

Let me, therefore, speak an encouraging word for the men who drift through society, and are said to be " rolling stones that gather no moss." Stones that roll ought to have no moss on them. They are said to be full of projects and plans ; and it is said that these projects and plans result, not in their prosperity, but in other men's. They never sit down in their own houses and have quiet and abundance ; but they are giving into the hands of others those hints by which they shall build a thousand dwellings.

Fortunate are we in the hopefulness of these precursors of society. Blessed is the society that is full of hopeful men. But there is a disease of hope, as well as a prophecy in hope. There is such a thing as perverted hopefulness. It is said that hope is a curse, when perverted, in the proportion in which it is a blessing in its natural state. Whether that be exactly true or not, it is true enough for all practical purposes. Hope, one of the greatest blessings that was ever given to man, when once perverted, is one of his greatest curses. It is hope, in one or other of its perverted forms, that leads men into all manner of gambling; and experience teaches us that the gambling spirit is one of the most mischievous, and one of the most incurable, of all the different kinds of mental disease.

This principle of unperverted hopefulness of which I have spoken, whose developments in society are so many and so pleasant, is specially needed, in the first place, by all those who endeavor to create in themselves the fabrics of a Christian character. My friends, you are called, not to a toilsome and burdensome life, unalleviated by promise or cheer. God knows full well that when he calls a young man who was born discordant in himself, and who carries in himself, it may be, the sins of his fathers and ancestors, and many of them in disproportion, that he calls him to rebuild himself. And do you not suppose that the eye of the loving Father discerns what the task is which consists in a man's living rightly; and do you not suppose that God has compassion upon him not merely, but that he has thrown upon him cheer, and that he says to him, "Hope!" It is very easy, comparatively speaking, to avoid vice or crime. That which is not easy is to refashion a discordant character. Where men have elements, both of body and soul, that are ill mated, and where the process of right-living means a re-organization by which every part of the mind may join in harmony through the due and proper subordination of the lower to the higher, it is not easy. It is not done by any spiritual shock. It is not done by any momentary volition. It is the work of training. It runs through days, and weeks, and months, and years, and brings forth results from causes that a man can command.

Now, there are many who enter upon a Christian life almost even-minded. One of the benefits of Christian culture, and especially of derivative culture, where the father and mother, and their fathers and mothers, and theirs again, have been educated in Christian morals and Christian emotion, is, that moral feeling and moral excellence become interpreted to the moral faculties, and become strong and fruitful. The children of Christian parents find it

easier to be Christians, or ought to, than those whose ancestors were not in morals thoroughbred. Therefore multitudes of persons who come into the Christian life find their way comparatively prepared for them. And so, for all those whose violent temper, whose superabundant pride, whose timidity and fear, whose rough and rampant passions, are in perpetual rebellion against their reason; for all those who, after a laborious experience, bear witness that they carry in them a law of death, that the flesh is in antagonism with the spirit, and the spirit with the flesh, and that while they see the ideal of light, while truth and righteousness and honor are beautiful to them, they find themselves day by day coming short, and groveling in the dust or in the mire,—for all those there is hope, in the very nature of things.

You are introduced into the Christian life under such circumstances that your work is far more onerous than the work of other men. It takes more for some to be Christians, a hundred times, than for others. And do you suppose the all-loving Father does not distinguish the difference?

If you are called to a Christian life, to a higher manhood, to a nobler spiritual ideal, and you find your way beset and obstructed on every side, hope. God will wait for you, and be gentle with you. Ply, therefore, every instrumentality, and do not give up in despair, saying, “There is no use in attempting to be a Christian man. Others succeed; I cannot.” Yes, others succeed, because they have more hope than you have, and press forward. Do you also press forward, hopefully. Take up the cross daily. Follow the God of hope, who is likewise the God of consolation. In all the combats to which men are called in the higher life, there is no providence more sustaining, and more needful, than that of hope.

How many, in divine providence, are appointed to poverty! I say *divine providence*, because I regard feebleness of constitution as a part of providence, and because I regard the unconscious habits with which many persons are brought up, as also included in the great scheme of providence. That part of natural law which is employed of God with direct cognition, is providence. And although poverty, in persons, largely depends upon place and time, opportunity or want of opportunity, skill or unskill, sagacity or the absence of sagacity, yet when a man is poor, having been rich, or without having tasted of riches, as the case may be, and when he finds himself perpetually at variance with his circumstances, surely, he needs the light of hope. Poverty is very bad. You may praise it as much as you please, but it is bad. It is very good in poems, but it is very bad in a house. It is very good in maxims, and it is

very good in sermons ; but it is very bad in practical life. Everybody thinks that other people ought to bear poverty with composure ; but nobody likes it, and it does not like anybody.

In a prosperous community, a single man may be poor and get along very well ; but such is the relation of things in this world, that a poor community can never be eminent in anything. You cannot civilize poverty in a whole community. It is a part of the original economy of providence, that if men come up morally they must come up physically also.

So then, in life, poverty is a great evil, but it is not irremediable. We are not to praise it in overmeasure. Certainly, we are not to praise it as a positive virtue. There are circumstances which may help, somewhat, to alleviate it ; but, after all, there is no better food than hope—not merely hope of a better day ; not the hope that says, “Poverty is not the worst thing that can befall a man ;” not the hope that leads one to say to his wife or child, “Take heart, my dear ; we shall be in better circumstances by-and-by.” That is very good ; but there ought to be something better. That is the lowest form of hope. There is a hope that men may have which consists in a light seen ahead, and showing how short, in the nature of things, is the space in which the weary struggle between them and poverty can go on.

It is inconvenient, when you are in a foreign country, where you are not known, to lose all your money ; it is troublesome to be out of funds in Vienna, or Rome, or any other strange city ; and the fact that you have houses and lands, and are worth a million dollars, in New York, does not relieve your present necessities. You want money at once ; and you cannot get along without it ; but it really seems absurd to you. Nobody will trust you, you are likely to go without meals ; and you fairly laugh, and say, “The idea ! Here I am, swamped !” All your life long, you have been accustomed to have what you wanted. When you were at home, everybody ran to do you service. There is not a man in New York that, on hearing your name would not give you credit for any amount, and be proud to accommodate you,—and you suddenly find yourself without money and without credit. You are amused at it, and you say, “I would like, now, just to see how it feels to be poor.” Forgetting your situation, you think you will make a pleasure trip, and you start for a hack ; but soon you are reminded that you have no money, to pay for a ride. You have not even a sixpence to pay your fare in an omnibus. Under such circumstances, a man’s feeling is, “I have money enough : I am debarred from the use of it just now, to be sure, but I have it ;”—and the annoyances to which he is sub-

jected seem ludicrous to him. A sense of humor comes over him. (And blessed is he who has a sense of the humorous. He has that which I think is worth more than money. If you can take off the grimness of life, if you can remove its asperities, by the use of wit and humor, you have it in your power to be a great benefactor. More light is thrown into darkness by the humorous element than by almost anything else. It is a perfect enchanter, that invests life with all manner of attractive features. Religion has sometimes been used to banish this element from society ; but you might as well take the grease from the wheels of a wagon, and let them squeak. Imagination is that which makes life go smooth and easy.)

Now, in ten thousand ways, if men have poverty, if they have troubles and annoyances, if they have inconveniences, they may rise above them by the sense of hope. You are not poor, except among men. Is not your Father infinitely rich ? This is not your home. It is beyond this world. Do you suppose a traveler at a caravansary thinks the cold, desolate, unfurnished building in which he rests and refreshes himself is his home ? He is thankful for its shadow by day, and for its shelter at night ; but these are only incidents of his journey. His home is not there. And, in the midst of poverty, men need to redeem themselves from its cares and torments by the light of hope. The future is beyond. You are not far from the end. God will, by-and-by, give you that which he holds for you ; and then what will matter all the troubles and annoyances through which you have passed ? "Overcome evil with good." Let hope dominate over fear and anxiety.

Hope is especially beneficial, also, to those who are in the struggles of daily duty in the affairs of life. In this land—especially in the Northwest—we are subject to meteorologic disturbances, to great whirlwinds, by which whole tracts of country are laid waste and made desolate. Villages are overthrown, and sometimes forests are torn up by the roots, in a moment.

And as it is in nature, so it is in society. There are sometimes commercial revulsions which are almost enough to ruin the whole community. We live so much on the principle of credit, we are so sanguine and hopeful, and we stretch out our arms so far, that, about every ten years, there passes over us a period of bankruptcy. As men will not reckon and settle as they go along, but are perpetually extending and extending, by-and-by the extension is such that every man is brought to a reckoning, sooner or later, by one of those sweeping commercial revulsions which compel every man to pay up, or to be bankrupt and begin again.

Besides these disturbances, there are ten thousand strains which are constantly coming upon individuals all the way through life. This man is thrown out of business. Sickness befalls another man, and destroys his prospects. Another man fails. Men in the midst of their career are brought to a dead stop. They are threatened with disaster on every side. What to do, they do not know. They need help ; but it is not very pleasant to go and ask others to help them, or to be obliged to be helped. Being thrown out of their regular pursuits, they find it difficult to get into them again, or to enter upon anything new. It is hard to graft a man late in life. You can graft young buds into a new stalk, but old buds cannot well be grafted into an old stalk.

Thus men are often overthrown by their own mistakes ; but they are quite as likely to be overthrown by their social liabilities, by their affiliations in society, by their connection with friends and neighbors. But, whatever be the cause, if this comes to them in mid-life, or late in life, it is most unfortunate, unless they are versatile, fruitful of resources, and hopeful in disposition. If despondency be superinduced upon disaster, in the case of any man, woe be to that man !

How blessed it is to have everything in one's self so ordered that when he is cast down he finds himself, not like clay that flattens out when it is thrown upon the ground, but like an India rubber ball, that springs back when it strikes any solid body. If a man is cast down to-day, let him say, "I shall be up again to-morrow." If he is destitute just now, let him say, "I shall have an abundance ere long." If he seems to be deserted by all mankind, let him say, "God will take care of me." If all looks dark and foreboding before him, let him say, "I shall come out right, though I do not now see my way clear."

When you are checked in your career, begin again. Do not let go of manhood and courage. Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed by fear. The inward man is better than the outward man. Your life is more than food or raiment. Take care of the inside. Above all things, see to it that you do not give up. Hold on. In many and many a battle, victory has been wrested from defeat by the last strokes in the most desperate emergency. Many and many a man carries himself over the critical point by hopefulness.

But do you say, "I am too old to hope ?" Do you say, "I have, constitutionally, too little hope ?" Then open your heart to God. Think of him in the sweetest aspects of his nature. Draw near to him in his great providential relations. "I will not let a sparrow

fall to the ground without my notice," he says; "and are not you of much more value to me than many sparrows? If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; if no child ever came to an earthly father and asked for bread, and received a stone, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him!" You are in need, and you know that he knows it. Draw on your faith and hope. This is the time for you to take those treasures which you have laid up in heaven. Be steadfast, unmovable. If, to-day, things are evil, look for better things to-morrow; and if they are evil to-morrow, look for better things the next day,—and so on to the end: for the worst thing that life can do to you is to kill you—and that is to crown you.

There are those who suffer in still other ways: as where the health itself is undermined; as where the mind becomes gloomy through morbid conditions of the body; as where men find themselves entirely shut up, and broken off from all the sources of ordinary enjoyment. While there are kinds of sickness that are quite compatible with the exercise of Christian feeling, there are other kinds which carry such distemperature that it is very difficult for a man under their influence to maintain hopefulness. But whatever your condition may be, do the best you can; and do not think that it is a part of the prerogative of sickness to bemoan one's state, and pity one's self. As much as possible, look away from yourself; look away from your pain and trouble; and as much as possible, look toward God. Even when you are under a cloud, and know that your distemperature is working its worst results upon your disposition and feeling, still rise as far as possible above it, and save yourself by hope. Why should a man forever brood on himself? Why should a man forever look in upon himself? Why should a man forever whirl round and round the circle of his own personal experience, till his head is so dizzy that he can see nothing? Why should a man so play the fool with himself?

Look up. Forget yourself as far as you can. Govern yourself in sickness. Forbid yourselves those things that are disallowable. As much as possible, fly out of your sufferings.

I have never seen insects that, if they fell into the water, did not attempt to fly out again as soon as possible. If some fish did not snap them up instantly, their nimble wings lifted them above the elements that entangled them, little by little; and when once they beat the free air again, they flew away rejoicing in their freedom.

If you are imperiled, if you are sunk in trouble, lift yourself upon your wings and fly—and hope is the soul's wings.

To those, likewise, who are brought through life to old age, there

is medicine in this subject. There are many experiences which, taken in general, are tolerable, but which, examined in all their bearings, are intolerable. It is a very painful thing to see a matron who has lived in toil forty-five or fifty years, spending herself upon her children, go back over her experience. One has died ; another has died ; still another has died. Another remains. Would to God he had died also ! He is dead, but he is not buried, and will not down. Poverty comes in, with disappointment. And by-and-by she is alone. She is seventy years of age. She is worn and bent. She has nothing more to expect in life. This woman, whose life has been a heroism ; this woman, who, all her life long, has not studied her personal comfort, but has plucked feathers from her own bosom to make the nest warm and soft for others,—she is cast out, and she goes, it may be, to the Home for the Indigent ; it may be to the Poor-house. And it is sad enough.

If you sit down and think of the fine sensibilities in such persons that have to be sheathed ; if you think how much they have to meet that is mortifying, you will see that these sensibilities, which were a source of enjoyment in early life, are, under such circumstances, only a source of suffering in later life. Criminals, and persons who are disgraced in society, are obliged to brutify themselves to prevent suffering in overmeasure. Thousands of persons late in life have to harden their hearts, or they are perpetually pierced by endless shames and annoyances.

But then, do not think of such things in that light. Do not think of what you suffer, or of what you might reasonably have hoped to possess. Take a larger view of the subject. If you can do nothing else, count the days, as boys in school do. I counted the months first, till there was but one left. Then I counted the weeks, of which there were only four. And when two or three of these were gone, I counted the days. Little by little, time passed away, and I looked eagerly for the close of the term, and I hailed the vacation without sleep and without appetite, so joyful and so excited was I.

Now, let persons in old age, cast out, dependent, helpless, and rasped on every side by misfortunes, stand and count the years, and months, and weeks, and days. It will be only a little while before you are on the other side—only a very few years ; and what we call *years* are, on the great circle, but hours, but moments, you may say.

Cheer up, then, matron ! Cheer up, old man in disgrace ! Take courage, all ye that have come to the conclusion that your life has been a mistake ! No, it has not. It may be that you have laid up

more than you think. You have built no house ; you have carried on no bank ; you cannot count your friends by great numbers ; there are thousands of things that men rejoice in here that you have not ; but you do not know how many comfortable words you have dropped as seeds into the hearts of persons as you have gone along. You do not know how your kindness has thrown radiance on the paths of others. You do not know how much good you have done with your faith. You do not know how much you have lightened the burdens of your fellow-men by the example of your life. You have done more good than you have any idea of. Many of you have been ministers of mercy to those around about you. When you go hence, one, and another, and another, whom you have directly or indirectly helped in their trouble and trial, will throng the gate of heaven with gratitude. You will be surprised to learn how many know you that you do not know.

There is a life not far beyond this ; and there is reason to hope, there is reason to believe, that the silver cords which are broken here shall be brought together again there ; that the golden bowl shall be restored, never to be broken again ; that the pitcher shall never more be broken at the fountain, nor the wheel at the cistern ; and that there shall be joy in the presence of God over a noble community of men made perfect, and ransomed from the flesh. The experiences of this life are but so many lessons by which men learn of their nobler manhood and higher nature. Blessed things lie just before you.

Is it blustering February ? and have you an oppressive sense of a severe winter ? Is it March, with high winds, and untimely intimations of heat and cold ? These are so many tokens of the coming of the spring. It is the breaking up of one season, and the coming in of another.

So, as infirmities multiply, as usefulness seems to decrease, as circumstances are limited, as more and more you are surrounded by evils which tend morbidly to discouragement and despondency, remember that we are saved by hope ; remember that the hand of faith carries up with it trust in God ; remember that the very genius and nature of that religion which you believe in is hopefulness ; remember that the whole economy of God's providence is founded on hope ; remember that the ministration of God's grace is keyed to hope. And hope on. Never yield up your faith until it lapses into fruition. You cannot hope too much ; but you may easily despond too much.

And now, may the God of all hope be with you, and cheer you, and comfort you, and guide you, and bring you into the light of everlasting peace.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU prayer-hearing God, we rejoice that, out of thine infinite goodness, thou art still willing to stoop unto us, and to listen to the cries of the most feeble and the most needy. Nor dost thou withhold these because of our unworthiness; for what man lives who could draw near to thee, if thou didst hide thyself from all except the just, and the pure, and the perfect. Thou hast thrust us far from thee, but art evermore drawing us nearer. Thou hast given us life in the lower spheres, and we are surrounded by ten thousand imperfections and annoyances; and thou givest us hope, that thou, in thy providence, and in thy love, and in thy mercy, art ever drawing us with affection and confidence toward thyself.

We thank thee that thou hast made it possible for thy servants, in days gone by, in the midst of darkness and trial and trouble, still to live by faith and by hope. We thank thee that thou hast granted to them the cordial of thine own spirit; and that by prayer they have been able to hold steadfastly on their way in spite of ten thousand discouragements. We rejoice that the same door is open to us; and that we, too, in the midst of care and trouble and sorrow, may draw near to thee in supplication. Nor need we know how thou wilt answer. Thou knowest thine own counsels; and we draw near to thee with all the confidence with which children supplicate a father. We would believe in thee, and in thy care of us, and in thy deep solicitude and love for us. And we pray that we may have begotten in us an implicit trust, and great hopefulness, not from what we are, but from what thou art. And so may we put our confidence in thee unto the very uttermost.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to all in thy presence the spiritual benefit which they need. Revive thy work in any in whom the impressions of early love are growing dim and fading out. Restore to them the power of truth, and give to them the assurance of life. May they have new intuitions and new impulses.

Draw near, we pray thee, to those who are tempted by fear, by doubt, by the world in which they dwell, by its cares, by its solicitations of pleasure, by its various influences. We pray that thou wilt so clothe the world with thine own self that men may discern thee in it, and have pleasure, business, care, every labor, and pain itself, sanctified.

Wilt thou draw near to those whose households are filled with darkness and trouble. Let light arise from thee. Be with thy children in the night. If they be upon the sea, with contrary winds, and with waves running high, come thou unto them, even though thy coming terrify them.

And we pray that thou wilt cause thy blessing to rest upon all those who are learning from the afflictions and the providences which have laid them low. We beseech thee that thou wilt lift up those who are cast down, and comfort those who are despondent, and give light to those who are plunged into darkness.

How great is the way which our feet must climb! How many are the burdens which we must carry! How often must we drink the bitter cup! How many disappointments belong to life! What care, what toil, what anguish at times, what fears, what discouragements! And yet, thou God of hope, we rejoice that in all trial and trouble thou art steadfast. Grant that we may be able to come to thee in every time of need, and find thee a present help. Deliver us, we pray thee, from those fears and doubts which hide thee. Send what thou wilt, and take away what thou wilt: we are strong if thou dost remain to our consciousness. We are weak in the midst of unlimited abundance, if we have no hope and no God in the world. Grant, then, the sense of thine own presence, that it may bring joy and strength to bear with patience the burdens of each day.

Prepare us thus, in life, for the life to come. May we believe that thou art, by pain and by pleasure, by fear and by hope, by joy and by sorrow, schooling us for that higher and better life.

So may we rise at last, every one of us. And how far soever we may now be from thee, may we live in the hope of yet beholding thee, the hope of joy in the life to come—a hope not dead, but full of fruit. Quicken us, comfort us, inspire us; and when we shall have passed through these trials and temptations of the minor life, then may we rise to full manhood, and see thee, be like thee, and be satisfied.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech thee that thy blessing may rest upon all those who are in this presence—upon those who are in discouragement; upon those who are suffering from remorse; upon those who are in deep sorrow; upon those who are in the midst of troubles, quick, sharp, gnawing; upon those who are overburdened; upon those who are bearing the yoke and carrying the cross; upon the disappointed ones. Thou art the One that didst bring light to dark places, and open prison-doors, and break off shackles, and release those that were in thrall and bondage; and grant, that from thine eyes may come the light of hope, as well as of love and cheer, to thy servants. May every one that is in thy presence now be thy servant, and hope in God. Thou art the Fountain of all good. It is sweeter for thee to give than to receive. Thy joy is in the joy of thy creatures. Grant that we may have faith in thee, trust in thee, wait patiently for thee, and not be ashamed to wait, feeling sure that thou wilt bear with us, and give victory at last, even to the weakest, as well as to those who are seemingly the strongest. And bring us safely to death. O blessed Door! O blessed Crown of life! Bring us more and more to see how sweet the face of Death is. Take from its brow all frowns. Take from its eyes all fierceness. Take from its lips all condemnation. May we behold death wonderingly, and say, "It is the coming of the Son of Man—of him that loved us and gave himself for us." O Jesus! thou that art the life, be our death, that we may have life and immortality in thee. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

THE CHRISTIAN USE OF THE TONGUE.

"And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."—Col. iii. 17.

He who accepts the thought that the whole apparatus of religion, as revealed and set forth in the New Testament, is an instrument for the development of a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus, will be struck, in the light of that view, and on further examination, with the details, the finishing touches which are put upon the portraiture of that goodness which men are to work out and maintain in themselves.

It is a fact that there are great truths, the knowledge of which is indispensable to a large Christian experience. It is also a fact that men are apt to suppose that if large views of truth are presented concerning the eternal sphere, there will flow out of the knowledge and faith of these great truths the details of a Christian life. So the apostles did not think. While they abundantly labored, and developed the theory of the divine nature and government to a certain extent, and especially while they developed those personal relations which the soul of man is to sustain through Jesus Christ to the Father, the particularity with which they then went on to teach us how to apply these great truths to every phase of practical life, is one of the most remarkable features of the New Testament; and I confess that I read with continued and ever-growing surprise the commands that have respect to what may be called the minor points of Christian life.

A great many things are taught in the family, and should be, that are very seldom taught in the pulpit. A great many things

are taught in the New Testament which we almost never hear enjoined in the pulpit. What are called the minor morals of life are, to a very limited extent, matters of pulpit prelection.

I propose, to-night, to set forth some few of the points which it is usually supposed to be the business of parents to teach, and which I shall enjoin upon the young, for the sake of corroborating the instructions which they receive in the family. Sometimes children and young persons feel that the iteration of truths by father and mother is irksome ; but when the same truths are uttered in the sanctuary, when it is shown that the very precepts of which they are so often reminded are mentioned also in Scripture, are insisted upon there, and are a part of religious truth, they frequently receive an impulse, and have an interest in them which they never did while they considered them as simple matters of domestic instruction.

I should be glad, furthermore, to produce the impression that Christian people do not represent true Christianity by virtue simply of faith in Christ, without abundant good works, without a beautiful life.

The first element of such a life, which is a complex one, and is far larger than I can even allude to, much less exhaust, to-night, is the matter of speech, and the Christian duties which belong to the use of the tongue.

There is, I think, no other source of suffering or of enjoyment so fruitful as the wrong or the right use of the gift of speech. I have sometimes thought that there was no music and no pleasure greater than that afforded by a sweet disposition uttered sweetly through the tongue. On the other hand, I have thought that the greatest blessing that could befall men would be to be dumb or to be deaf, one or the other. The tongue is a fountain of good—a cloud dropping down perpetual richness : the tongue is a nettle, a scourge, a torment.

The management of the tongue is declared to be equivalent to the sum-total of Christian grace. It is taught that a man who governs his tongue is a perfect man. That is to say, if a man govern his tongue, there is nothing that he cannot do. And when you consider how much men are mixed up in life, and how incessantly the temptation to speak is brought to bear upon them ; when you consider how much there is in speech, and that the tongue is only the instrument of that which lies behind it and above it, and that all the feelings try to utter themselves ; when you consider in what ways the feelings rise up in the hearts of men ; how, day in and day out, men are talking, and talking, and talking, either malignly or

benignly, either through the reason or the imagination, quickened by mirthfulness, and humor, and kindness, or sharply, critically, uncharitably, then you begin to get some idea of what a harvest is sowed by the tongue. You begin to have some hint of the vastness of the field in which it operates, and of the endlessness of its fruit; to have a feeble conception of how much pleasure and how much misery is caused by it. It is a fire that warms men: it is a brand whose sparks, when it is shaken, burn men. It draws men like music; or it drives men like a scourge. And even the apostle wondered how one fountain could send forth bitter waters and sweet, not at the same time, but in such close succession, as seems to be the case with this one spring.

According to Scripture, it is the duty of every Christian man to order his conversation in such a way as to say something. Hundreds of persons, in the family, and in their intercourse with men, talk all day, and scarcely utter anything that is worth remembering. There are many people who indulge in empty talk; talk on empty themes; talk of things transient; talk of unimportant things—or worse than that.

Now, it is an explicit command of the Word of God that men should talk *to edification*. Their conversation is to be seasoned. Nothing is so rapid as food without salt, unless it be talk that has no wisdom in it. It is as much a command of Scripture that men should use their tongues for edification, as that they should be righteous or holy. No man can do this, if he does not feel bound in conscience to take heed thereto. How few of you ever make your conversation the subject of thought or study! How seldom do parents, when they come to the morning, noon, or evening meal, feel that their conversation is a part of the birthright and education of their children! How few persons take pains to select profitable topics of conversation! How poor is the conversation of men! And yet, how rich it might be! For every man knows some things better than anybody else around him knows them. There is light given to every man. His peculiar disposition, the special combination of his faculties, the particular line of experience which has been developed in him, gives to each person some things that cannot well be found anywhere else; and every man should make his contribution to conversational wisdom.

In marked contrast with this, is that conversation which is not only rapid and useless, but, still more, mischievous; which detracts from the happiness of life; which sows the seeds of suspicion; which quickens in man all those malign tendencies which are already too strong, and need no whetting by conversation.

Under this head, also, comes the use of the tongue for recriminations, and for *brawling*, as the Scripture hath it ; the use of the tongue to irritate, to annoy, to brow-beat, to spread mischief among friends ; the use of the tongue as a surgeon's knife, to cut up the absent ; the use of the tongue to spread all manner of evil ; the use of the tongue as a sower of thorns and of briars.

There are many persons who think they are Christians because they have had an experience ; but they do not feel it to be their Christian duty to use their tongues according to the law of kindness. Nor do they think, in the confession of their sins, to confess that, day in and day out, they are making somebody unhappy by the manner in which they use that member.

There are thousands who, when they see what mischief they have done with their tongues, say, " Oh ! I did not mean to do any hurt." They scatter firebrands and arrows and death, and then plead that they did not intend any harm ! As if a man, sitting in his window, should fire his rifle out along the crowded street, and then, when report was brought to him that this child was shot, that woman slain, and this man wounded, should say, " Well, well, I really did not mean to hurt anybody," so men go on firing this *mitrailleuse* of the mouth ; and when a knowledge of the havoc which they are making comes to them, they say, " Well, I was a little careless with my tongue, to be sure ; but I did not mean any harm."

There are other ways in which we are to employ the tongue as an instrument of kindness. It seems to me that, in this democratic country, we carry the idea of intellectual independence to such an extent that we are in danger of losing out of society many of those thousand little services which do not increase our care, which it is no burden to perform, and which add very much to the comfort of life.

We are, in human society, giving and taking ; and every man owes all that he can contribute to make the way of human life a happy way. One of the methods of doing this is salutation. I was struck, when traveling in Europe, with the courtesy which I saw in German families. I was struck, in Paris, with the difference between the habits of the people there and our habits, in regard to salutations. On entering a French shop, I was expected to pay my respects to the woman who sat a little removed from the door, and also to the person that served me. In other words, I was expected to be a *gentleman*. But we go in and out of our American stores gruff, asking simply for what we want, saying *Good-morning* to nobody, saying *Good-bye* to nobody, and thinking of nobody.

It seems a small thing, if a man goes into a store to buy any article, to be polite to those wait on him there. Kindly salutations whenever and wherever you meet men, often do them a great deal of good. Though they may amount to very little to some people, they amount to a great deal to others.

I one day met a plain man whom I had known well, and stopped to shake hands with him, and he said, "You do not know how much good this does me, and men like me. I shall go home and tell my wife and children of it, and it will be two or three days' happiness to us." Few men of rank and station, who are honored and respected in the community, know how many men in society can be made happy simply by their attention.

Let me speak of one of my early friends—Governor Noble, of Indiana. He had just the right name. A *noble* man he was. I was very much struck with the fact that whenever he met me, if it was twenty times a day, he invariably shook hands with me, and invariably said some little kind thing to me. And he did not do it because I was a minister. I have seen him do the same thing to poor old Tom, who was crippled by rheumatism. He did it to the plainest working men. It was his habit. He always carried courtesy along with him; he saluted men whenever he met them; and he had the same kindly word of recognition for all.

Now, I know a thing of this sort once is a little, and twice is a little; but where it is followed up for a whole life-time, it is a great treasure and comfort. Many a man would rather have one cheerful, kind saluting word, than to have money, or to have any more substantial favor done to him.

And where all men are doing this, how the air becomes rich and ripe with enjoyment! Our hard, barren, unsympathizing, unsaluting way is to be corrected. We are not enough given to Christian courtesy. Try it a little while. Salute the aged. Say kindly things to those who are of your own rank. "Condescend to men of low estate;" not as if you were going down to them, carrying all your pride with you. Do not let them know that you condescend. Let them find you by their side, as it were, a companion; not a witness of their inferiority, not their critic and judge, but their companion. Recognize them as standing on a common ground of friendliness with you. Let them see that you feel there are common bonds of brotherhood which bind all classes to each other—the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the fortunate and the unfortunate. Act toward them according to those principles of Christian manhood which are repeatedly laid down in Scripture, and which every one of us should seek to observe.

In the East, salutations are carried to an extent which is mischievous. That is the reason why, when the apostles were sent forth, our Master said, "Salute no man by the way." It was the custom there, first to have the opening salutation; then to have a response to that; then to have a stately rejoinder to that; and then to have a re-rejoinder upon that; and it takes a man half an hour to go through these preliminary salutations. When the apostles went out, they were to waste no time in such ceremonies, which were clearly excessive.

But *we* are in no great danger of carrying the ceremony of salutation to excess. It befits us, therefore, to take heed how we minify even the few salutations which we have. *Good-bye* is all we have left of *God be with you*; for men are ashamed any longer to use that. Instead of the grand salutation *God be with you*, you shall hear men who are parting from each other say, "Well, old fellow, take care of yourself!" Men are substituting a coarse way of greeting and saluting each other, instead of using those reverent, dignified, pleasure-giving, respect-inspiring salutations which belong to antiquity, and which should belong to every refined society—and to none so much as that which calls itself Christian.

I may mention, as connected with the same general topic of the use of the tongue, the habit of egotism and of boasting. I discuss it now, not on the side of folly, but simply on the side of ill manners. No man has a right to carry himself so that his attitude, his expression, his gestures, or his language, is an insult or an offense to any one. If I were to take some assafœtida, and saturate my garments with it, and move through crowded assemblies, everybody would say, not that I had violated any municipal or State law, but that I had violated the law of good conduct, the law of politeness, the law of kindness. No man has a right in any way to annoy men. No man has a right to thrust himself or his affairs forward in such a way that men are compelled to consider him or those affairs.

Egotism, within certain bounds, is proper and profitable. A man is supposed to know more about himself than anything else. Many times a man can speak more profitably about himself than about any one else. A whole evening may sometimes be spent to good advantage by one person, in recounting to a company the history of his travels or observations. A man may sometimes give an account of his personal experience, and not be regarded as guilty of egotism, in the offensive sense of that term. But such an overweening attention to one's self as obliges other persons to eat and drink him, as it were, wherever he goes—this is an offense to those

who are about him. And still more is this true when egotism is carried to the extent of boasting.

The father and mother tell the child not to boast, not to brawl, and it is good and wholesome counsel of the household; but it is also a part of the instruction of the Word of God. It is not only a matter of propriety in education, but it is a part of duty in religion. Egotism, in its bad sense, is a sin against God, because it is an offense to man. Boasting is a sin against God, because it is a violation of propriety, and introduces an element of discomfort into society, and not an element of quiet, of pleasure, or of profit.

The same is true of disputatiousness, or the incessant disposition of men to argue or dispute questions, and to make themselves critics of others.

The theme of the tongue is so rich, so various, that I might spend the whole evening, and scarcely touch the points of the topic. But I pass on to the consideration of another theme—namely, the duty of good manners. Men often speak of good manners as *an accomplishment*. I speak of them as *a duty*.

What, then, are good manners? Such manners as the usages of society have recognized as being agreeable to men. Such manners as take away rudeness, and remit to the brute creation all coarseness. There are a great many who feel that good manners are effeminate. They have a feeling that rude bluntness is a great deal more manly than good manners. It is a great deal more *beastly*. But when men are crowded in communities, the art of living together is no small art. How to diminish friction; how to promote ease of intercourse; how to make every part of a man's life contribute to the welfare and satisfaction of those around him; how to keep down offensive pride; how to banish the raspings of selfishness from the intercourse of men; how to move among men inspired by various and conflicting motives, and yet not have collisions—this is the function of good manners.

It is not effeminate to be refined. And in this land no man should plead inability. There may be a peasantry in other countries; there may be a class in foreign lands, who have no opportunities, there may be those whose toil is so continuous, whose opportunities for knowing what constitutes good manners are so few, and whose ignorance is so gross, that they are excusable; but this is not the case with any within the sound of my voice.

That a man is a mechanic, is no reason why he should not be a perfect gentleman. I affirm for every American citizen the right to be not simply a man, but a *good-mannered* man. I have seen men at the anvil who were as perfect gentlemen as men of books or

men of society. I know no reason why a man who tans hides should not be a gentleman. I know no reason why a man who digs in the soil, a man who works in metals and wood, a man who builds, should not be a perfect gentleman. There is nothing in mechanical occupations which is incompatible with the highest courtesy.

Paul was very much of a gentleman. Wherever he went he showed himself to be a perfect gentleman. The courtesy of his letters is without parallel. There are not in literature any such specimens of exquisite courtesy as are to be found in the letters of Paul.

Not only is the violation of good manners inexcusable on ordinary grounds, but it is sinful. When, therefore, parents and guardians and teachers would inspire the young with a desire for the manners of good society, it is not to be thought that they are accomplishments which may be accepted or rejected. Every man is bound to observe the laws of politeness.

True politeness is the spirit of benevolence showing itself in a refined way. I think that if *politeness* were substituted for *charity* in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, it would not be inappropriately used :

"Politeness suffereth long, and is kind; politeness envieth not; politeness vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil" [and so on].

It is the expression of good-will and kindness. It promotes both beauty in the man who possesses it, and happiness in those who are about him. It is a religious duty, and should be a part of religious training.

There is a great deal of contempt expressed for what is called *etiquette* in society. Now and then there are elements of *etiquette* which perhaps might well be ridiculed ; but in the main there is a just reason for all those customs which come under the head of *etiquette*. There is a reason which has regard to facility of intercourse. There is a reason in the avoidance of offense. There is a reason in comfort and happiness. And no man can afford to violate these unwritten customs of *etiquette* who wishes to act as a Christian gentleman.

I may speak, also, of a tendency which is bred by our institutions—the want of veneration. There are various ways in which this want of veneration shows itself. We often hear that there is not the same respect shown for the aged that there used to be. We know that there is very little respect shown for magistrates and men in authority. This is partly due, I think, to the institutions under which we live. One of the unfortunate effects derived from the

early stages of democratic training is the sense of personal sovereignty; the feeling that we stand on as high ground as anybody else. Under monarchical institutions men are taught to revere the great and glorious in government. The feeling of reverence does not prevail to any great extent among us. I discern a great lack in this respect. Children, now-a-days, are brought up to be pert, to be saucy, to be almost without restraint. They are brought up to have very little regard either for their parents or for their superiors. And, although there are a great many Christian households where children are rightly bred in this regard, it seems to me there has been a decay of that instruction which used to prevail, the tendency of which was to make children modest and respectful. We bring up our children to be old, and smart, and impertinent.

I discern, too, in the intercourse of society, that there is not so much respect paid to woman as is befitting. There is never any cause of complaint concerning the treatment of a woman if she be beautiful. Oh no! there is no trouble then. I have seen young men spring from their seats to make room for a fair and accomplished person. And yet, I have seen a weary working woman, laden with bundles containing the necessaries of life, stand and look wistfully for a seat, when no man cared to rise for her. I have seen a mother dragged down by nourishing her child, and carrying it, ill-clad, homely, even scrawny, and nobody was eager or anxious to do reverence to her. We pay great respect to taste and beauty, but very little to womanhood, independent of external conditions. There are a great many young men who will bear to have much more said to them on this subject than has been said to them by their fathers or mothers or teachers.

I think every right-minded man is pained to receive respect from persons who show that they pay it to him by reason of his rank and public reputation, while they deny it to those who have no such advantages as he enjoys.

This courtesy which carries with it respect; this testimony of veneration to the aged; this yielding one's self in a thousand little society rites for the sake of making others happy—oh, what brightness it gives to life! What beauty, what adornment, it gives to Christian character!

There are many other points that I might speak of. The effect of punctuality and order; the relations which men sustain to each other's convenience and necessities—these, and a hundred other branches of this subject, I might discourse upon; but it is not necessary that I should go into them. I have given such examples

as I have, merely as specimens, for the purpose of calling your attention to the minuteness and carefulness with which the Scripture inculcates these things. It enjoins not merely the right spirit, but the right spirit manifested in the most beautiful way.

Take, for instance, liberality. It is not enough to be simply liberal. "Let him that giveth"—what? swell, and crow, and boast? Oh, no. "Let him that giveth do it with simplicity," says Paul to the Romans. In another place he says, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver"—not one that gives "grudgingly or of necessity." When men give, they are to give willingly, with the right feeling; and not simply with the right feeling, but with the right feeling in its most beautiful form. We are not simply to perform duties, but we are to perform them in the ways that are most pleasant to others.

"Whatsoever things are of good report"—that is, the things which society has learned to regard as beautiful, useful, and pleasure-bearing—these are enjoined. Whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all to the glory of God. Serve God in these little things, for the sum of them is greater than any single great thing. Here and there are men who are permitted to show their heroism in some great deed; but it is in little things that we are to show our heroism. We speak, we act, we walk, we meet men, and we are with men; and we have ten thousand opportunities for doing good; and if we but have happiness within, and the power of making happiness through thought, through emotion, through cheerfulness, through hopefulness, through courage, through mirth, what benefactors may we be, strewing life with ten thousand blessings, which cost us but little, and enable us to confer joy and comfort upon others!

Read the closing chapters of almost every one of the epistles; read Paul's letters to Titus; read the closing parts of his letters to Timothy; read the last chapters of Romans, of Philippians, of Colossians, and of Thessalonians; and see how he brings his teachings to a point in regard to these minute particulars of man's every-day life. See how much they are insisted upon and required as a part of Christian living, as well as of Christian disposition.

Now, a man may be polite, may be courteous, may observe all etiquette, may guard his tongue, and yet not be a Christian; or, peradventure, a man may be a Christian and fail in all these: but the ideal of a Christian man is one who, while he has faith and love toward God, has also benevolence toward men. Righteousness in word and deed, and graciousness toward our fellow-men—for these we are to seek, and labor, and pray, and watch.

When men become Christians, one of the first questions they should ask themselves is, "Now, what am I to do?" Here is a person that has been brought up in wealth and refinement—in a household where he has been taught every virtue: and being converted, and joining the church, the first thing he does is to ask himself, "What shall I do?" He thinks of mission schools, of distributing tracts, or of some self-denial, he scarcely knows what. I say to every such person, Be beautiful. How shall he do it? By putting on airs, peacock-like? No; by employing every power which God has given him in a spirit of benevolence. If you have education, if you are endowed with talents in any direction, there is in you a latent force by which you may bring happiness upon others. In meekness, in gentleness, in sweetness of temper, make your brothers and sisters happier. Fill the hearts of your parents with a more generous pride for you. See that you recognize and treat all as worthy of your consideration. Pay respect to the low. Manifest toward those who are about you sympathy and humility. Manifest moral beauty in conduct and life. Let your Christian feeling overflow in ten thousand forms of beautiful action.

This is my duty; it is your duty; it is everybody's duty; it is the duty of children at school and at home; it is a duty that belongs to Christian life under all circumstances. We are to exhibit those traits which give joy and brightness every day, wherever we are. Self-denial is to be practiced in those ten thousand little things in which you forego your own desires in order to confer happiness on others. And in their joy you will find yourself paid a thousand-fold.

"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Or, according to the language of our text,

"Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE draw near to thee, our Father, encouraged by the memory of thy past goodness to us. We remember the hours of trouble in which we have sought thee, and found rest and comfort. Thou hast taught us, by experience, to put our trust in thee, as in a Father who pities us, and knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. We draw near to thee as to a merciful High-priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, in all points tempted as we have been, and yet without sin, and able to succor those who are tempted. We rejoice that thou hast borne our sin, and carried our sorrow. The chastisement of our peace has been upon thee. By thy stripes we are healed.

We cannot enter into the greatness of the meaning, we cannot understand the fullness, of all that which thou hast borne for us. Thine interposition, thy mediation, thy fore-running and thy solicitation for us in the heavenly realm, we cannot understand. We believe the great and glorious truth, the fringe, the skirts, the beginnings of which we discern; but we cannot understand all the fullness, all the richness, all the joy and all the blessedness of the truth of thy love and care, of thy pardoning power, and of thine atoning work.

We rejoice in thee; and though by searching we cannot find thee out, so far as our dull thought rises it is light; it is joy; it is blessed sympathy; it is help full of hope and full of strength for the weak and the failing. Be gracious, we beseech of thee, this evening, to all who are gathered into thy presence. May they have opened to them the door of hope, that they may discern in God their personal Friend. May they not stand afar off, afraid. May they not, by reason of their conscious sinfulness, be kept from thee. May they know that thy heart is the universal remedy; that in that is ourath; and that it is thy nature to impart it to those who need it. In thee is everlasting strength for those who are weak and ready to perish. Thou didst open prison doors. Thou didst come to break bonds and shackles, to bring forth those who are imprisoned, and to give them light and liberty. Thou didst come to release those who are in bondage, and make them free—yes, sons of God.

We pray that every one in thy presence may find himself borne toward this beautiful God. In thee may we put our trust. On thee all our hopes do rest. We are poor; we are ignorant; we are simple; we are needy. With every infirmity we press our way through life. Give us to feel the effulgence, the amplitude, the richness and the glory of thy nature. And may we, tonight, hear thee calling us as sons of God, heirs with Jesus Christ, to an eternal inheritance. So, we beseech of thee, may every heart have the greatest blessing which can be given—the faith of God, the sense of the divine presence, of relationship and of strength, imparted from the divine hand to us.

Bless, we pray thee, all those who are near to us. Remember those who are separated from us, and scattered far away. Remember any that are dear to us who are on the sea, and any who are in foreign lands. Remember those who are in the wilderness, and those who in thy providence are dispersed upon the errands of life every whither. We thank thee that there is no distance in thy thought. All are before thee.

Take care, not only of those who are dear to us, but of us. We pray thee that more and more we may know how to hold ourselves sanctified, with our affection one toward another on the one side, and with the consciousness of human infirmity on the other, and with a foresight of thy glorious perfection, toward which all of us are hastening.

We pray that thou wilt cheer any who are despondent, strengthen any who are ready to perish. Withdraw the power of temptation from those who are overmatched. Break and lead away from their sins any who are led captive thereby.

We pray that thou wilt more and more make thy truth a word of power. More and more may it be as a sword of the Spirit.

And we pray that thy kingdom may come in the hearts of this congregation. In this church, and in all the churches of this city, wilt thou unite thy people with more and more fervor and zeal and activity in doing good. And we pray that thou wilt help every one so to adorn himself in all virtue, in all manliness, in the beauty of holiness, that men, seeing them, shall glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Prepare us, we beseech thee, for the duties of the week which now comes near to us. Prepare us with patience and with gentleness. Give us endurance as good soldiers. May our faith never fail. May our courage never faint. May we never be weary in well-doing. May we overflow, filled with the bounty of God, as streams that the mountains feed; and from us may that bounty flow out to others. And in thy mercy and goodness wilt thou take us at last, when we have finished our earthly career, to thy spirit-land, where we shall understand as we are understood; where we shall know as we are known; where we shall be as the angels of God.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us to go to thy Word for the rules of our life, not only to know what are its truths, but that we may learn how to carry them out in all the particulars of our thought, our will, our conduct, our associations one with another; that we may learn how to honor thee in speech, in silence, in helping each other, in edifying one another, in pleasing each other, and in removing the thorns and snares which lie so thickly in human life, in learning how we may spread abroad kindness, and gentleness, and meekness, and humbleness of mind, among our fellow-men. We pray that thou wilt give us the light of thy Spirit and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that the fruit of the Spirit may be in us, and that we may bring it forth abundantly.

Bless us when we sing again to thy praise. Go home with us. Make our homes more and more radiant with the true Spirit of Christ. And bring us at last to our heavenly home, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

THE RIGHT USE OF RETROSPECTION.

“Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.”—
MATT. viii. 22.

No man can interpret the instruction of Jesus, who inclines to a literal and material view of life or of duty. As he claimed to be divine, so there is this incidental evidence of it: that his mind moved in the higher realm of thought, and that, though it touched the earth, as it were, it never materialized itself. He who attempts to put a literal construction even upon the advocacy, or the ethics, of common morals as they came from the lips of Christ, not only commits an indiscretion, but goes far to overthrow the whole truth which he endeavored to teach. His teaching, instead of being simply literal, is full of projections, full of figures, full of surprises. What could be more surprising than for him to stand by the side of the Syrophenician woman who asked him to heal her daughter, and tell her, to her face, and in the presence of a sympathizing crowd, that he came to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Only think of Jesus who came to advocate the universality of God's government, and who taught that the whole human race were God's children—only think of him as standing apparently on the prejudices of the Jews, and refusing to heal this woman's daughter because she was not a Jew!

Take this other case, where one came to him, and said, “I will follow thee; but suffer me first to go and bury my father.” As we read it in another gospel, Jesus said to him, “Follow thou me now,” and he said, “Suffer me first to go and bury my father.” The reply was (and it strikes one as inhuman, at first), “Let the dead bury their dead: follow thou me.”

Does religion require that a man shall forget his father and his mother? Does religion turn a man's heart into gall, so that he

hates his father and mother, as you would suppose some men to think by their interpretations of certain passages of Scripture? Is there anything more sacred than the grief of a son whose father is dead? Is there anything more certainly a duty, in the estimation of all persons of reason, and honor, and justice, and gratitude, than to pay the last rites of respect at the burial of one's father? And yet, our Master stood by the side of this young man who proposed to follow him, but who first would go and bury his father, and said, "No; follow me now. Let the dead bury their dead." But when you come to look a little more closely at it, there is nothing inharmonious, and nothing that shocks, in it. For our Savior came to set men upon a higher level of life. He came to renovate their purposes, to exalt their ambitions into the spiritual realm; and he was interpreted by the whole generation, at that time, to mean that he was about to establish an outward commonwealth. Men thought they saw the shining of the banner of a victorious army. They imagined that the way was full of palaces, and wealth, and pleasure, and banqueting, and national triumph, and the augmentation of those joys which spring from men's carnal nature: it was these things that they saw; and they crowded around the Lord Jesus, saying, "I will go with you." There were enough who were ready to be his treasurer, and secretary of state, and generals, and lieutenants, and everything of that kind; but when our Master said, "My kingdom is not of this world: my kingdom is founded in peace, purity, justice, truth and love, and my command to every one who follows me is, "Take up your cross and follow me"—that is, "Imitate me; deny and overcome selfishness, and the whole underpower of carnal life, and rise to the sphere of ennobled and consecrated thoughts, and come after me;" then the young man said, "I will; but just let me go home first, and bury my father." What was there in this that was wrong? Why he took the occasion of his father's burial as an excuse for getting rid of performing his duty towards God. It was a pretense. It was a fraud. And as he stood thus excusing himself from the most sacred duty of following Christ, the reply to him, "Let the dead bury their dead: follow thou me," was eminently fitting. Christ saw through the disguise, and answered, not as in ordinary circumstances he would have answered, and not as it strikes you and me he should have answered, but according to the state of mind which he discerned the young man to be in. He selected the very strongest point that could have been taken. He took the case of a son who was bereaved, and was apparently seeking to manifest reverently the noblest feelings of his nature toward his sire. But, in this case, for

the young man to go back and bury his father, was in fact to go back and bury himself. It was to throw himself into the open sepulchre.

To follow Christ is to grow up into him in all things. It is to reproduce in ourselves, under the divine inspiration, all those traits which make the character of Christ memorable through the ages, and which interpret through it, to us, the nature of God himself.

Now, this growth of Christian manliness, of piety, in you, lies before, and not behind. We are to find our duties, and our own best manhood, not by going back, but by going forward. It is right for us to look back upon our life, and upon all things of interest which lie behind us, for the sake of preparing ourselves the better to advance ; but it is not right for us to look back upon them, for the sake of excusing ourselves from advancing. We have a right to look back upon sorrows and upon joys, if they influence us to go forward ; but if they are so many anchors which hold us stationary in the past or in the present, then they are evil. It is right for us to look back, if we can thus find inspiration to honor and enterprise and courage ; but not, if looking back fills us with discontent, and discouragement, and fear, and suffering. The past is not to be a source of distress and torment to men. Their true life lies before them ; and considerations of duty to God and to themselves, as well as considerations of rectitude and honor, should keep men's eyes looking forward, and their steps moving onward. There is a past that men may use, which is full of sweetness and of love, to which we may resort with profit. But there is a place in the past where we may bury that which we can no longer use to advantage. The past may become a Gehenna, an Aceldama ; full of perishing things, full of ghastly bones. Such a past no man has a right to cherish. No man has a right to make of his past life a stumbling-block, an obstruction in the way of his going forward to a new and a higher life. Every man's business, no matter what he has gone through, no matter what or where he is, and no matter what he has suffered or done, is to press forward. Even to the thief upon the cross, the way forward was the right way. Paradise lies not behind any man, but before every man.

We shall now employ this view as a rule of criticism by which to judge all prevailing practices that are mischievous, whether regarded as Christian or merely manly—premising that no man has made such a use of the past as he ought to have done, and that every man has been a creature of weakness. Every man has had sins that oppressed him. Every man has had inexperience through which he has been obliged to make experiments. Every man has had his

battle with temptations. Every man has had his scars. Every man has had a past, out of which, if he will, he can draw hideous spectres that shall annoy his pride, distress his conscience, and blur the vision of his moral sense. And since every man has such a past, the question is, how it is best for him to use it.

First, it is not wise for a man, in using the past, to dwell perpetually upon his own general sinfulness. If such a looking back be sincere and genuine ; if a man dwell on the fact that he is a sinner in such a way that, like a bow, it shoots him in the other direction, then he is making a normal and wholesome use of the retrospect of his sinfulness ; but if a man thinks he is to look through the scenes of his youth, his early manhood, and his later life, and coin and mold them, and take the influence that comes from them as a means of grace—if he does it sincerely, he does it most mischievously. When a man has done wrong and has been sorry for it, it should drift back, go behind, sink down, and be forgotten.

Still worse is it, if a man feels it to be his duty to look back, and falls into a kind of conventional, liturgical recitation of his sins, so that every testimony of truth, every prayer, every speech that he makes among God's people, is a perpetual confession—a sort of endless recounting of past transgressions. For when he who is a child of God, having committed sin, has repented of it, he has slain it. The old sins of Christian men—where are they ? Not in the sea ; not in the soil ; not upon the earth ; not in the air ; not in heaven ; not with God himself, who says, “I will remember them no more forever.” And that which God has forgotten, who ought to remember ? Old stumblings, old mistakes, old wrongs—it is for them to go down to annihilation. Why should a man be fumbling in the graveyard of his own experience, to raise up spectres of thought and memory from them ? As if that would make him better ! As if he would be the better now for raking up the sins of his youth ! Everybody knows you sinned in youth. Everybody knows that no man lives who does not sin. The question is, what shall you do with your past sins ? Look at them, if you please, long enough to direct your future course by them, but then let them go. We should look forward, for the most part : for that which lies before us is full of hope ; and hope is wholesome ; it is sweet ; it is healthy. We are saved by hope. It is, as it were, the food of the soul, on which true manhood grows.

What if a man should do by his body as many think it a duty to do by their souls ? Men try to keep in mind their sinfulness, as though that were necessary to make them humble before men ; but suppose a man should preserve the parings of his finger-nails, the clip-

pings of his hair, the excretions of his whole body, in order to live according to the laws of nature in a wholesome way? Who could tolerate such an absurdity? Men would revolt at it. And shall men do by their souls what they would not do by their bodies? Wrongs done—let them go. Drown the past. Walk not with gibbering ghosts: they are bad company. Do not let them haunt your life.

Morbid regrets, whether moral, social, or physical, are not to be cherished. I think the hardest lot a man has to bear is that of being born malformed. I think there are no persons who deserve so much sympathy, and who get so little, as those who, through life, are obliged to wear a body that calls forth the derision, or at least the pity, of all who come near them. It is not an ungrateful thing to have the eyes of other persons turned upon you, if you are in health and strength; there is something kindly even in the look of strangers, under such circumstances: but where a man is malformed, and where the deformity is one that cannot be hidden, the mortification and suffering which he undergoes are very great, and the effect on his disposition is very bad. He has an uncommonly good moral temperament, and is sound in his manhood, who can come up from childhood with a malformation of his body, and not be perverted in his moral sense by the consciousness that people look upon him as one on whom God has set a mark of misfortune.

Oftentimes the same takes place where persons are made exceedingly feeble by disease; where they early lose the power which belongs to common manhood.

Now, under all these circumstances, it is the duty of every one, not to look back, and say, "If I had had such a chance as you had, it would have been different; if the door of life had opened to me as it did to you, I should have got along well enough. You can afford to give me good advice, because you are sound of foot, strong of limb, and have known nothing of what it was to suffer from an evil look or from derision. In childhood, I stood at the outer edge of pleasure, obliged to look on wistfully. In the sports of my companions I could bear no part. I had no conscious strength or agility. To me was accorded no place in the field of skill. I was out of the battle before I was in it. I was kept in life without my consent. It is easy for you to tell me that it is not best to be mourning over these things." Why, must a man have a fever, in order to be fit to take care of you, when you have a fever? Is it not the man that is well that can give advice to those that are sick? And do not the words of our Saviour apply to you when he says,

"Who of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?" It is very troublesome and painful, no doubt, to be born a dwarf; but shall a man that is born a dwarf whine and cry? Will that make him grow? Is there rain in tears that will make the root vigorous, and its branches fructify? You are what you are in the order of God's providence, nor can repentance and regrets change the past; and there is but one thing for you to do: forget that which is behind, and think of that which is before. Look forward. Your life lies ahead. And you cannot tell by the shell what the pearl is. If we were to judge of the contents of the oyster only by the rude, rough exterior, who would ever think of looking inside of it for exquisite pearls? A man may be deformed; he may be much reduced by sickness; he may have lost his career in this life; but, in the long run, that may not be so great a misfortune as you think. You do not know what the whole problem of life is for which God sent you into the world. Every man bears in himself some outline. Some structure is to be wrought out in him. When our life that is hid with Christ in God shall appear, there will be developed some reason why every man was made as he was; and that reason will shine with eternal glory and praise. It doth not yet appear what we shall be. The poorest, the lamest, the most halting ones, to whom it seems as if their senses had been bombarded and battered, have God with them. Their life lies in the future, and it is better that they should be looking forward than backward. It is better that they should look above and beyond pains, and sorrows, and restrictions, and limitations.

The same is true of those regrets which many persons indulge in for lost opportunities in life. "If I had known in my childhood," says one, "what I know now, I should not have neglected industry and application to study. I had a chance of becoming a man, but in my heedlessness I let it go by; and now I find no place for repentance, though I seek it with tears." I hear a man say, "I might have been an Agassiz; I might have been a scholar; my father wanted me to go to school; but I would not. I would give all I am worth in the world, if I had been through college." Well, I should think that feeling might be cured by looking at folks who have been through college! And yet there are men who, all their life long, with all their power and various success, cannot get over the feeling, "I had no education when I was a boy; I had the opportunity of becoming almost anything I might choose; I was so foolish as not to improve it, and now I am suffering the consequences of my neglect." And what are you going to do about

it? Can you enter the second time into your mother's womb, and start life over again? Suppose you are sorry every day, and suppose you harass and torment yourself continually, will it make any difference? Let the past alone. You have been born once; you have had one childhood; you have peopled your life with mistakes; you have come to late or middle manhood, as the case may be; and why go back? Bury the dead. Let them go.

"Ah! if I had only been favored as I see others to have been, I should now be an artist, I should be a scholar, I should be a publicist, instead of toiling here in this stithy." Nay, this is treason against one's own manhood and dignity, as well as against the providence of God. The past cannot be helped. Therefore do not go back to it.

A man in the middle of the ocean upon a raft of timber may have some reasons for regret; but there is only one manly thing for him to do, and that is to endure, and seek and labor for safety or rescue. It is not wise for him to refuse to work, saying, "Oh, if I only had a boat instead of a raft!" There are others who are floating on the sea, having put out in a boat; and the water is rough, and they are half paralyzed with fear; and they say, "Oh, that we were in a ship!" There are others who are on a ship, and it is leaking, and in danger of foundering; and they say, "Oh, if, instead of being on this foul, villainous ship, we were only in a staunch steamship!" Now, manliness requires, when you are on the sea, and in danger, no matter what your vessel may be, that you should make for the land, or to the nearest point of safety. Do not whine or cry because you are not on something better. Wherever you are in life, make the best of your circumstances. Remember that you have all the time that there is in the direction of eternity. If you have lost all there is in this world, then there is nothing left you but death and the graveyard, so far as this life is concerned; but stand in your place, hopeful and cheerful, and say, "I will make the best of the grace of God. I will not throw that away, because I have thrown away everything else."

Still more foolish and culpable are the regrets of men for lost property. How many there are who will tell you, when they ask your sympathy and succor, "I have not always been so: I have seen better days!" Well, I would not tell of it, even if it is true. It seems to me a man ought to have manhood enough to walk in later life where he began to walk in the beginning of life. Persons ought not to cry on account of their victuals and clothes. A man ought to have enough in Christ Jesus and in immortality to make him willing to wait until God shall take him to heaven. I never

saw anybody so poor that he did not bid fair to live till he died ; and dying is the best part of life, to one who knows how to live worthily.

Here you feed on disappointments, and sighs, and groans, and transitory pleasures, and delusive expectations, and conscious weaknesses ; and you stumble and fall. Life is full of troubles ; and if you want to make them of use to you, think of them as designed for your good ; and say, " I will bear them ; and, whatever else may happen, nothing can take away from me the coronation of death." Sooner or later, your career in this world will come to an end. Somehow you will get through the present life. I never saw a man that did not steer for the grave ; and you will find it at last. Having that certainty before you, why should you moan and whine over your lot ? Why should you complain that you have not the comforts that you once had ?

I do not undervalue wealth ; I hold it to be, under divine providence, a great economic power for civilizing nations. It is possible for individuals in communities where wealth is developed, to be virtuous and manly and noble, without being rich ; but, in the progress of nations at large, it is not possible for communities to come into a state of Christian piety without industry, and frugality, and thrift, and well-administered wealth. Where men are living in such communities as ours, wealth is not necessary to manhood and virtue ; and if a man has had wealth, and lost it, why should he go about bemoaning his loss, thus showing that he has lost his manhood as well as his money ; or, that there was nothing to him but money ? You are often surprised that so much money can hang on so small a core. One sometimes doubts the doctrine of immortality, because, when some men's property is taken away, there is so little left. Why should men degrade themselves at the loss of property when they live under the light of revelation, and have the whole world's experience teaching them that a man can be manly without this external adjunct ? Why should not a man, who has had the development and culture of wealth, be manly enough to show the world that he can be poor and yet contented, and that what there seemed to be of him was not artificial, but genuine ?

There are men that I could mention by the score, yea, by the hundred, who, if you were to strip them of their money, of their honors, and of their influence, would not be diminished a whit, but would stand with as much intrinsic power as they had before, because that power lay in their essential manhood. Do you suppose Chief Justice Marshall would have been less a man, if his chief-justiceship had been taken away from him ? Do you suppose John

Milton, when he was poor, blind, and cast out of office, was less a giant than he was before? It made no difference with Shakespeare whether he had a house, or a theater, or any other outward thing. His nature was in himself. God put that into him which made him manly and noble; and he was independent of external conditions.

Many persons mourn that they have lost that wealth which they never had, but which they expected to have—and this is a touch of folly greater than the foregoing. That venture which was to bring them in a hundred thousand dollars miscarried; they lost what they expected to have; and they go around grieving over their loss. A man says, “I lost a hundred thousand dollars on such a day.” “How was that?” asks the listener. “I was as sure of it as though I had it in my hand; and if it had not been for a mean, contemptible fellow who went back on me, I should have had it; but now it is gone.” How many men dabble in “pools,” thinking to get rich, until something upsets the pool, and they find themselves floundering, and of no more value than so many tadpoles, and then mourn, and say that they have lost, because they failed to get what they meant to have! A man sat on the steps of a hotel in Chicago, the other day, with a friend of mine. They were looking over the great waste. The man seemed unconscious of my friend’s presence, for a time, and was sighing, sighing. By-and-by his grief was so great that he had to get relief; and he said, “I once owned nearly twenty acres of land right in there. Like a fool, I sold it. If I had kept it until now, I should have been worth millions of dollars!” So men are mourning over lost wealth, whether they really once owned houses and lands, or whether they had the prospect of getting them, and failed to get them. Is there anything baser than for a man to torment his life, destroy his usefulness, and make everybody around him miserable, by whining because he has lost wealth that he actually possessed, or wealth that he has merely shaken hands with?

Stop looking into the past. Bury out of sight those corpses that stink, and forget them. What if your whole fortune has been taken from you? Do not stand and repine, but go to work and repair the loss. What if you have had everything cut off? Do not give up, and say, “I can never again be where I was.” You can be where you are; and your business is to make the best of your present circumstances. You have love and sympathy, and God and immortality, left. The loss of property does not touch any of these things. The vicissitudes of wealth cannot reach the inward manhood. As, though the storm may rage over the mountain, men

are sheltered and protected in the cave on its side ; so, there ought to be in every man's soul a place where, though everything is desolated without, he can retreat, and rest.

There is mourning, too, over lost pleasures. Many persons whine, and moan, and look back to better days and to old joys. We never think with sadness of the lost flowers of the summer that is gone. We never, standing and shivering in January and February, cry because the warm season, with its treasures, has passed away. We always say, "The months are speeding, and soon there will be another spring and another summer as bountiful as the old ones." But men talk foolishly about their pleasures, and mourn over them when they are lost, as if they had met with a great misfortune.

I can imagine one in shabby raiment going past a house of festivity, where are the light of joy and the sound of dancing, and saying to herself, "I was once courted and sought at just such places as that ; but now things are changed, and this is a dark world to me." The trouble with you is, not that you have lost your pleasure, but that you have lost yourself ; and the latter loss is much greater and more to be deplored than the former. If pleasures are gone, and mourning follows, it shows that there is a lack in the manhood or womanhood. Take such good as God gives you, and rejoice in it, in the days of your youth or manhood ; but do not give way to repining, nor bring your soul into bondage to any such thing. He only is a man, and she only is a woman, who are adequate to the circumstances in which God's providence puts them. What would you think if our Government should say to Sheridan, "Go out from Chicago to where the Modocs are," and he should go, but should weep all the way across the plains, saying, "This is very different fare, boys, from that which we have been accustomed to. Where we were, we lived well, we had everything that was good ; but here we have to eat hard-tack and dry meat. Our food does not compare very well with that which we used to get at Delmonico's in New York, does it ?" What would you think of a man who, when sent off on a mission of great responsibility, should bemoan the lack of the comforts which he has left behind ? I would not breathe the breath of scorn upon innocent pleasures and enjoyments when God sends them to you ; but I do scorn and rebuke those who, when they see pleasures go from them, regret and repine. Let the dead be buried. When they are gone, let them alone.

But suppose pleasures have gone by reason of the wastes of dissipation ? Suppose they have gone by reason of outworn age ?

Suppose the eye sees no more except men as trees walking? Suppose the ear refuses to bring back sweet sounds? Suppose pains rack the flesh and bones? And suppose a man stands in the midst of life, and says, "I that used to be so full of manhood, what am I?" Oh, are you so small, are you so weak, are you so unmanly, as to suppose that this is all there is of you—the mere competence to enjoy the things which come by the senses? Has life, that school in which you have been receiving your education, done nothing more for you than to make you a pining, discontented, crying old man?

More worthy, yet not altogether commendable, are the same retrospects in the realm of friendship. There is no loss so touching and so deep as that which we feel when we bury our loved ones. Grief is sacred then. But no grief has the right of immortality. That ground belongs to joy, to hope, to faith. It has no right to long life. No person has a right to go back perpetually, and keep open the wounds which God would heal, and to enfeeble himself when he should grow strong by suffering. Hear the voice of him "who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." "No affliction," says he by the voice of his servant, "for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Nobody has a right to sit down by the grave and give himself to it as a sanctuary. No person has a right to strike darkness through all the chambers of memory.

Is there any grief more touching than that which is filled with a consciousness of unfulfilled duty? "Alas! if I had known that my girl, just blossoming into life, was to be taken from me, how much more would I have done for her!" "Ah! if I had known that my companion, between whom and me came sunshine and showers, was to leave me forever, would I ever have come into her presence with a moody and scowling brow? Would I ever have been unreasonable in my conduct toward her? Would I have demanded so much service, and been willing to render so little? Would I not have been more vigilant to fulfill my whole duty toward her? But now she is gone, and I cannot recall her. The past is all dark and bitter to me." Well, these are most wholesome and salutary reflections, but only on one ground—namely, that they bring forth the fruit of fidelity to those who have been spared to you. Waste not your time or your strength in vain regrets over those who are gone. Wound not your heart with a poisoned dagger, because you have unfulfilled duties of affection in the past;

but look forward, and see to it that you fulfill all like duties in the future. Those who are separated widely apart—shall not they yet stand together again, and greet each other with smiles of love that shall never die out from the face?

So we often pine for the lost because, if we had known, as nobody could know beforehand, what experience has taught us, we might have kept them. “If I had known that that ride would have brought my child home fevered and ready to die, would I have taken it?” “If I had understood the complaint from which the child was suffering, and had known what a critical state it was in, would I have said to it, ‘Be still! be still! go and lie down, and you will feel better?’” “If I had dreamed that such and such remedies, of such a school, would have such an effect, and lead to the grave, would I have used them? If I had heeded so-and-so’s advice, I might have had my child now.” Thus persons torment themselves with vain regrets in regard to those who have gone from them. They make grief heavier than it needs to be, and render it unprofitable. They prevent themselves from looking into the future with chastened eye and heart, and with a more hopeful disposition.

Let the dead bury their dead! Let the past go! Press forward to the future! Lift up your head! I see many plants that, in summer, when the storm is out, catch drops of rain, and, not knowing how to shed them, are weighed down almost to the ground. And when the storm is gone, they shake themselves; and, little by little, they stretch themselves up again; and the next day they stand, with all their leaves unfolded once more, fragrant and beautiful, as if refreshed, washed, and made strong. Men may, in troubles—especially the worst ones—be bowed down; but nobody should lie prostrate, as if torn up by the roots. For that, the Word of God was not given to you. For that, the promise of Christ and the visitation of the Holy Ghost were not given to you. For that, the future was not unrolled. You are a child of God, for whom he has provided grace to help in time of need. When you are afflicted, he is nearer to you than at any other time. Be worthy of this Friend and Sympathizer and Benefactor.

I will detain you further, only to speak of the mournings and repentances of those who have finished life. Sad is the picture which we too often see in the weakness of age. How many dreary old men and complaining old women there are who sit in the household, looking back, and finding fault with everything that is present and everything that has been! How many persons there

ers who thus make themselves a burden ! One of the things for which I pray devoutly is, that my life may be terminated when I am in full strength, suddenly, so that I need not leak out, drop by drop, and become a burden on the hands of others, and fill the house with discontent, and cease to love the faces of children because they make a noise, and no longer have affinity for any of the sweet things that are going on in the family. To become changed thus, even though change is in accordance with nature, and is inevitable, is dreadful to me as purgatory—if there is such a thing, as I devoutly believe there is, because I have seen it. When a man that used to be prompt, and vigorous, and clear, and fruitful, and companionable, and noble in all the offices of life, has dwindled and dwindled, till his voice becomes like the voice of winds piping through cracks and crevices—a mourning, wailing sound, without joy and without sweetness—till you look away from him to think of him, till you have to go back from what he is to what he was, in order to rightly estimate him, then he is to be pitied. God deliver me from going through such a purgatory. But if it comes to me, may I be prepared for it ; and may you be prepared for it, if it comes to you.

If, as old age approaches, your disposition is sweetened and mellowed, if your nature is ripened, if your faith is strengthened, and if disinterested kindness is developed in you, happy will it be for you ; but if not, your state will be pitiable. For what can be more wretched than to see a man standing on the verge of this life and looking back into the world from which he is happily escaping, and holding out trembling hands which can grasp nothing, without realizing or discerning any of the blessings which beckon him on to the heaven above ? I can imagine an owl sitting between night and morning, and hooting, and singing a pæan to darkness, and mourning that the sun is driving away the stars, and that the woods are being made uncongenial to him by the sweet voices of the birds of the day ; but who can conceive how a man can stand in the twilight of immortality, and hoot and hoot, and desire to live longer, as though there was nothing beyond—no light, no hope, no certainty of a glorified manhood ?

What are all the things which men bear here but mere dust on the car that is speeding them to their bridal ? What are all the things that men have here but wings that waft them on their way ? Then spread your sails, that they may carry you over your voyage. There is to every one who is a man in Christ Jesus a manhood ever rolling toward the future. Let no man fall back to the graceless task of perpetually exhuming what ought to remain buried. May

you be delivered from a memory which is but a graveyard of desires that continually rise and walk, day and night, with gibberings, as airy ghosts. The enfranchisement of Christ; the liberty of the sons of God; the hope of immortality; the certainty of heaven; the sonship; the crown; the palm; the harp; the song; the youth that never dims; the treasures that never waste; the joys that spring again as you pluck them,—these things lie over against you.

Then let the past go! Let the dead bury their dead! Live! Ye are the children of light, and love, and hope, and glory.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, almighty God, our Father, that thou dost not put far from thee those that are less than thyself, and that are imperfect, that are sinful. If thou didst, who from among the children of men could draw near to thee? For all of us are weak; all of us are imperfect; all of us have sinned against light and against knowledge, in every part and in every faculty. We have sought selfish ends. We have sought the present, and not the future. We have been negligent of all the obligations of love and gratitude. We have fulfilled our own ways, and not sought to glorify Him from whom we spring, and to whom we are to go again. We rejoice that thou art not a man—that thou art God; and by all that there is in thee of light, our darkness shall be illumined. All that there is in thee of goodness shall be made over to us, and shall be an education to us in goodness. Thou art pure, and hast taught us the lesson of purity, whose office throughout the universe is to lift things up to itself, and cleanse them.

And now, O Lord, we believe that it is the work of thy whole administration and government to bring light out of darkness, joy out of sorrow, and to rear things from insignificance to grandeur and glory. We believe that thou art sowing everywhere the seeds of eternal life; and that where thou art sowing, there thou art reaping. All earth is, and time and the endless ages of eternity shall be, filled with thy beneficence.

We desire, O Lord our God, to lift ourselves up into the consciousness of thy being, and of our exceeding strength and gladness in thee. For that which we could not learn from nature, thou hast spoken. Against our thought, in spite of our surprise, we cannot but believe thy word which thou hast ratified in thy Son. We are thy children. In thy soul paternity is not as it is in ours, truckling, and weak, and partial, and faint with imperfection, and even with selfishness. In thee, Fatherhood moves in infiniteness and majesty and glory. Thou art long-suffering. Thou art gracious. Thou art full of compassion. Rather than that any should die, thou didst give thine own self unto death. Rather than that suffering should take hold upon immortality, thou didst give thy Son to die for the world. Bring us into the faith of this paternity of God, that we may know what our strength is, and what are the riches of his grace toward those who believe in him. Why should the children of a King go mourning all their days? Why should any complain of weakness to whom is vouchsafed the whole realm of divine power? Who is so poor that for him the day doth not come with arms full of bounty? Who is so poor that for him the seasons do not pour forth their unlimited supplies? Who is so rich that death, his benefactor, is not calling to him? Who is so far from thee, and so much neglected, that the eternal

spheres do not wait for him? Are not ~~mine~~ angels, are not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation? How full of them must be the very air which we breathe? How round about us is their breath and their sacred touch? How is all the universe alive and sentient with the thought and feeling of the love of Him who is infinite and universal? And why are we among the dregs? Why are we outcast? Why are we sad? Whether we gain or lose, whether the world smiles or scowls, whether we are in sickness or in health, in adversity or in prosperity, have we not Thee? Is not the fair harbor of heaven open to us? Is there any gale blowing across the way of life that does not carry us thitherward? And what is there to weep over in life, if we have immortality—if the life to come is ours? What is there that we cannot part with, if the taking it be but a way in which thou dost communicate thine own self unto us? We pray that we may have more faith, more trust in God. We pray that we may be delivered from all that downward looking and backward looking by which men seek among the dead for the inspiration of life. May we look up, and set our hearts on things above—so far above, that no shaft can reach to disturb our settled peace. At last may we learn how to dwell where thou dost brood thine own. And though there be to us no such ladder as that which thy servant beheld, with angels descending and ascending upon it, there is a better sight to us, who see heaven opening, and Christ sitting at the right hand of God. With no mediation, with nothing intermediate, to us is the heaven opened; to us is there commerce with thyself. Thou art thinking of us. Thy hand is upon us. Thou art watching over us. Thy wings are round about us. Why, then, should we not rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice always?

We beseech of thee that we may have courage, and a child-like faith, and gladness which shall break out into hymns and songs perpetually. May we walk among men, not ignorant that we have their weakness, not unconscious that we, like them, are evil, and are easily crushed under temptation; and yet, may we walk as those whom God loves, and on whom he looks, and whom he has raised up, so that, though we are cast down, we shall feel that we are not destroyed. May we be as children of light, with faces evermore lifted up to take the beams of the orient as they come from thee.

We pray that thou wilt bless those that are striving to live thus. If there are those who are not endeavoring so to live, may they be brought to know their better manhood. May they learn that this life is not sufficient for them. May they see that it is not worth the having if it is all. May they believe in that nobler manhood which reaches beyond the present, and takes hold of the future. May they know that riches await them above. Grant that they may be led to form purposes of effort and faith in the divine service. May those who are making their first essay in the heavenly life be strengthened against all discouragement. Though they may stumble, and wander, and backslide, though they may often find themselves overmatched by adversaries, yet, may they gird up their loins, and press forward, knowing that he who is the Captain of their salvation hath slain death, and that ~~we~~ shall be slain in them.

Grant, we beseech thee, thy blessing and presence to those who have tasted of thy love, who know somewhat of the graciousness of their Saviour, and who have learned where to find refuge in distress. Still may thy banner of love be over them. Let the communications of the Holy Ghost bring them peace and gladness.

We pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt grant that we may know how to bear one another's burdens, and overlook one another's faults, and walk with meekness and gentleness among men. May we know how to bear the name of Christ with us so that men shall know something of what he is, and

of what is in us. Forbid that we should mis-spell that sacred name, or cast upon it any disgrace. May we walk guided by thy spirit, lifted up into a serener and purer atmosphere, and more and more ennobled by the presence of God, unto the very end.

Remember our households. Remember our children, and their children. Remember our dear friends. Remember all those with whom we have labored, in every field. Remember the companions of our boyhood and early travel. Remember all those who are far from us upon the sea, and in distant lands, and in the wilderness. Remember all those, everywhere, who are in peril. We pray that thou wilt grant the divine presence, and thy salvation, to them all.

Bless the land in which we dwell. We pray that its institutions may be more and more favorable to eternal justice. Bless the efforts which are being made on every hand to spread intelligence. And unite with the diffusion of knowledge the growth of virtue and purity.

We pray, not for our own land alone, which has been so signally blest, but for all the nations of the earth. May they be advanced in knowledge, and in that light which shall exorcise superstition and ignorance, and drive it from their midst. At last, may all men, everywhere, be so strong that they cannot be oppressed; so that despotism shall die, and that every one of thy creatures shall stand in that light and liberty wherewith Christ doth make men free. Let thy kingdom come and let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We ask it for Christ Jesus' sake. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word which we have spoken. May it be a cheer to all of us. Grant that we may take hold of hands with a common purpose to be good; to do good; to help one another; to obstruct the way of none; to raise the low; to heal the sick; to strengthen the weak; to show the way to those that are erring; to do by all men as thou art doing by us. For if thou wert to look upon us as we look upon our fellow men who have offended us, who of us could stand for an hour? But what mercy hast thou shown us! How hast thou blessed us in every way! How hast thou been as a Father to us! How hast thou helped us to become worthy children. and perfect, as our Father in heaven is perfect, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. And being thus richly blessed, may we so live as to be a blessing to those around us. And, looking forward, and waiting for the Lord Jesus Christ, he shall see us afar off: discerning us through the shades of death, he shall recognize us; and running to meet us, he shall fall on our neck, and bless us, as we come to our Father's house. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit shall be the praise, evermore. *Amen.*

HEALING VIRTUE IN CHRIST.

I will read to you an incident that is recorded in the 5th chapter of Mark's Gospel, beginning with the 24th verse :

“ And Jesus went with him ; and much people followed him, and thronged him. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up ; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes ? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me ? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole ; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”

This is but a single incident on a very busy day in the life of our Saviour. He had returned from the other side of the Sea of Galilee. He had been greeted by the accustomed throng, only now it was larger and more enthusiastic than usual. He was at Capernaum—his own city, as he called it ; for it was the city where, after leaving Nazareth, he went to live. It was there that one of his disciples made him a great feast, and invited his friends and acquaintances. There, also, was witnessed that very significant and remarkable circumstance, the enthusiasm of publicans and sinners, drawn to him by some strange and mysterious influence. They did not pause even for an invitation, but broke into the dining-hall ; and some of them sat with him ; and he ate and drank with them.

There and everywhere, the world through, to eat and drink with one is a sign of fellowship ; but in Oriental lands more peculiarly so than in our own ; and that event brought upon him the charge that he was eating and drinking with publicans and sinners. The righteous Pharisees murmured, calling forth this memorable reply from our Master :

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."
"They that be whole, need not a physician, but they that are sick."

When this repast was finished, he was assailed by John's disciples. John, their master, that rigid and highly abstemious man, had been thrown into prison by reason of his fidelity to Jesus, who professed to be his friend, who was baptized by him, and who was sitting in the house of one of his disciples at a royal banquet, eating and drinking, and acting as though he enjoyed it. The Pharisees found fault with him, and the disciples of John found fault with him; the former because he ate with publicans and sinners, and the latter because he ate at all. John's disciples said, "Why do not your disciples fast? John taught his disciples to fast." The reply of Christ was, "Why should they fast? They are not unhappy. When the days come that they are unhappy, then it will be time enough for them to display the signs of unhappiness. There is nothing imperative, nothing necessitous, in fasting."

While he was thus discoursing with them, there came to him a ruler, a man of eminence, saying, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death;" and beseeching him to go and heal her. Jesus arose and followed him; but the crowd would not be dismissed. They were fascinated with his discourse, and they thronged his way. And what a crowd it was! A rabble gathered out of our streets, composed of all sorts and kinds of people, would seem decent compared with a crowd in an Oriental country, where there was so much poverty, where poverty was so squalid, and where ill fare and bad housing led to so many diseases—especially where affections of the eye were almost universal, and where men broke out with all manner of skin diseases, clear down to leprosy itself. Along the highway were human beings of every description: the rich and the poor; the Pharisees and the Saducees; the rulers and the ruled; young men and maidens; old men and children—mixed, doubtless, with some foreigners, for Galilee was full of the detritus of almost all nations.

There was this great rolling crowd; and as Jesus went on, there fell out, here and there, little incidents, some of which are recorded; and among them was this one, which is a kind of interlude, or episode, of his journey, whose mission was the healing of the little child of the ruler.

We know not what those thousands of people thought as he was thus going forward. Some had mere thoughts of curiosity. The thoughts of some were controversial. Some were marveling, gaping, and waiting for a miracle. Some, perhaps, were wishing that the miracle of the loaves and fishes would be renewed. All sorts of

thoughts there were. But there was in this great crowd a poor creature who was in need, and whose object was to get relief.

Her name is not given. It is a little remarkable how many of the personages that are connected with incidents in Scripture, and that interest us profoundly, are without a name. The widow, with her mites, who called down the Saviour's benediction; the Syrophenician woman, who brought her daughter to be healed; the father, whose son was possessed of demons—neither of these has name or history, so far as any record in Scripture is concerned.

As a picture from a magic lantern is dashed upon the screen, is looked at for a moment, then vanishes, and is gone; so different persons come upon the stage in the narratives of the Evangelists, enact perfect dramas, exquisite in texture and construction, and momentous in moral bearing, and then pass away. There is no lineage, no record, no name; and yet all is so vivid and powerful.

As to this woman, whether she was a Jew or a Gentile, whether or not she was in good standing in society, we know not. She is simply spoken of as "a certain woman." She was in this great throng for a purpose. She seems to have suffered from infirmity. It is to be inferred that she was a person of reflection and decision; and yet, she seems to have had a tremulous, sensitive nature, which held her back from any very positive overt or declarative action. But she needed a friend. She was sick; and what is all the world worth when one is sick? What is all that is presented to the eye, what is the income of the ear, what are all the treasures of life worth under such circumstances? What is everything that can be desired worth when one is thoroughly sick? Sickness takes the flavor out of everything. It changes the whole current and course of desire and feeling. She had long been sick. She had worn out years in sickness, and those years had well nigh worn her out. *All that a man hath will he give for his life.*

She had gone to her own physician, and he could do nothing for her. Honest, faithful, and skilled, doubtless, according to the measure of those times, her case defied his ability. She heard of another physician of eminence, and went to him; but all he could do availed nothing. Little by little, her substance melted away. Twelve years of doctoring! one must be well off to go through that. Her little patrimony, whatever it was; all her earnings, whatever they were, had been laudably consecrated to an end which was natural and right. But supposing her to have been surrounded by honest, faithful, and skillful physicians, there is many and many a disease that the best physician cannot heal; and those to whom she had applied could not cure her. So it is said, in very

simple and affecting language, "She was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." After taking nauseous drug after nauseous drug, she was worse instead of better.

Therefore there was nothing for her to do but drag out her years in misery. Alas, how sad it is not to have a constitution strong enough to throw off disease, and yet so strong that disease cannot kill you ! If men could only get well or die, one of the two, that would be endurable ; but to hang half way between health and death, to be as good as dead when you are about in life, that is wretched indeed. And that was her case. The days and nights were without light and comfort to her.

Well, she had heard of Jesus. Who had not ? The whole land rang with his name. There was not a child that did not know some amazing story of him. The very beggars had heard of him. He had been heard of by those who did not go near the synagogue. The Roman soldiers, the Roman centurions, the Pharisees, everybody had heard of Jesus. She, among others, had heard of him ; and, seeing or hearing that he was passing by, and beholding a great throng, she joined herself to them. They were rushing forward, and pushing each other hither and thither, to keep up with the Saviour—most of them, doubtless, from comparatively ignoble motives. But here was a person who came into this throng with a purpose. She thought, "Here is one who heals the sick, and raises the very dead ; and it may be that he will heal me."

If she had been a woman of overt courage she would have gone before the Saviour's face, and stopped him, and asked him to heal her. I infer that she was a woman of great sensibility, by reason of her whole manner. She stole up to the Saviour. She did not dare to face him. She seems to have been under the impression that she had done wrong. The best thing she ever did, probably, she confessed as if it had been a sin against Christ. We see in her conduct indications of great sensibility ; and yet, her whole course shows that she had a purpose, and had good sense in forming it and carrying it out.

My friends, how many there are who are just like her—who are sick—only not in body. They are sick in heart, in soul, in the understanding. Their minds are perverted, so that they do not know the truth. Their consciences are torpid, and they get no light and no condemnation from them. They are sick in pride, that distempers their doubts. They are sick in the sense of right and wrong, which is perpetually turning the key the wrong way to wind up the machinery of life. They are sick, because they are living as if the animal life were the whole or the best part of life.

They are sick because, like a plant that is hidden from the sun, they are hidden from God, and cannot grow with health and strength.

How many there are that are sick! How many there are that, being sick, know it! How many there are that, knowing they are sick, have tried to remedy their sickness! They have sought many physicians; that is to say, they have plied themselves with a thousand nostrums. They have resorted to one, and another, and another means, for the healing of that which can be healed only by the radical prescription of the divine and omnipotent Physician. How many have set themselves upon rounds of consecutive duties, hoping that, by a faithful observance of them, by performing, at such and such times, such and such tasks, by regular attendance upon religious services, they shall bring themselves into a state in which they shall feel better! And how many, after having gone through a series of prescriptions like these, have felt no better—on the whole, have rather seemed worse!

Many such turn themselves, honestly, every whither. They go to one and to another church. They listen to one and to another administrator of the truth. They make vows and covenants. Sometimes they pray. Frequently they read the Word of God. They do a thousand things. But they are no better. That is to say, they are not happy. They have a sense of unrest. There is distemperature in their disposition. Home does not make them happy. Pleasures fly away from them. Business does not satisfy them. Although, for a moment, their inward thoughts may be covered by outward enjoyments, how many there are who cannot long hide from themselves their grief, and the cause that lies behind it! How many are in a state in which, if they look into themselves, they must say, “With all our efforts, we are no happier, but, if possible, more unhappy!”

How few of these persons are as wise as the woman of whom we are speaking. She availed herself of the chance which was afforded her to become healed. Her meeting with Christ was not the result of any forethought and planning on her part. She was conscious of her sickness; but she knew not which way to turn; and, having heard of this greatest of all Physicians, and seeing that he was passing, she embraced the opportunity to try what he could do for her. They, diseased, suffering from leprosy, defiled in the inward **man**, without holiness, or happiness, or spiritual power, unfruitful in good, fruitful only in evil, yet believe in God and in heaven, and long to have some evidence in themselves that they are heirs of immortality and glory; and still, they are without hope and without God in the world.

Now, to such there come just such chances as came to this woman. That is, Jesus passes by. There are a thousand opportunities, there are a thousand points of time, when the truth of God might be brought home to them searchingly, and might have practical efficacy with them, and when they might rid themselves of trouble, and cast off the burden from their souls—might escape from sickness, and find health.

Let us continue the history of this woman. What to her was all that crowd? She carried in herself that which occupied all her thought, and she said within herself, "Who am that I should speak with him? How could I bear his look?" There was something in the port and in the look of Christ, at times, which no man could bear. Evidently there was in his manner, at times, an overwhelming majesty. Perhaps she had seen him at some of these times, and did not dare to go before his face. She said in herself, perhaps, "If I steal up to him, so gracious is he, so wonderful is his power, and such miracles has he performed, that it may be that a very touch of his garment would heal me."

Ah! it is a good thing for men to be filled with grace to such a degree as that their unconscious moods and unpurposed influence shall be healing, as well as the things which they intend. So it was with our Master. Purposely he cast out demons. He set persons free from insanities. He quenched the fire of fevers. Dropsies were dried up by him. Men were brought to health on every side through his instrumentality. With a word, with a gesture, with a look, with a touch, he did great works of beneficence. But so full was he of divine savor, of spiritual power, that his very garments, as it were, were imbued with it; and when the woman stole up and touched the hem of his garment, straightway she experienced a joyful release. Oh, soul-filling surprise! She that for twelve years had not known one hour's exemption from disease, felt the sovereign balm of perfect health flow through her veins; and she stood restored! She was well!

Oh, how sweet to the convalescent is the first ride! How savory to one that has been deadly sick, and has come back to health, is the first permission to partake freely of food! How grateful to those who have long been deprived of the light, is the privilege of seeing the shining of the sun again! To one who has been diseased, and is restored to his normal condition, how delightful it is to feel once more the blood coursing through the veins in the old way! How wondrous are the sensations of renewed health, when it comes with any degree of positiveness and suddenness! And she who had known weary nights and dark hours; she who had experienced all manner

of annoyances and mortifications, and had lost her mean, and her patience, and her faith, and her hope, and had been going down, down, down; she who had tried everything to no purpose—she, now, at last, had this thought cross her mind—“Who knows but this great Physician may have something in his very garments which, if I touch them, will bring health to me?” And, sure enough, no sooner did she touch his garments than health flashed through her joyful veins! She was young again!

Well, ought she not, in that very instant, to have cried out? Ought she to have taken such bounty and to have borne no witness to it? It is true that she did not say anything; but her silence was not altogether from ingratitude. It may have been a relative want of appreciation of the greatness of the favor. She may have said to herself, “How do I know that it is anything more than my imagination? I will say nothing about it until I am sure.”—just as a great many persons, when they begin to feel the saving power of the divine spirit in their souls, say, “I will not speak of this; I will wait; I will see what it is.” She may have said, “How can I speak of this? My lips refuse to open; I can not speak.” It may have been sensibility, delicacy of feeling, shrinkingness, that kept her from speaking. How many there are who believe that they have been pardoned, and that the blood of Christ which takes away the stain of sin has healed them, but who consult their sensibility and their shrinking tastes, and say, “How can I speak of this?” And it does not look as though it were wicked. Yet, if there be anything that a person ought to acknowledge, it is obligations which touch the great core of things.

He who has been healed by a faithful physician should be the friend of that physician as long as he lives. It may be that he acted professionally; it may be that he took his fee; but money never pays a physician who performs his duty faithfully. If your child has come back from death, never forget the faithful old nurse that made her room a cradle in which the child rocked, and gave her days and nights to the care of it. For such service as hers nothing material can be an adequate compensation. If your companion has been rescued from the grave by the skill and fidelity of a physician, mark him down in the calendar of your love, and never lose an opportunity to bear witness to your appreciation of what he has done for you. For, although you pay his bill, you do not thus cancel your whole indebtedness to him. The stores of love that were saved to you through his interference cannot be measured by mere coin. The debt is one that only the heart can pay.

We are ungrateful in a thousand ways which we hardly suspect.

We do not pay what we owe to men who enfranchise our understanding. Authors who give us a higher and nobler conception of life; poets who give wings to our fancy, so to speak, enabling us to fly higher than ordinary men, who stumble and fall down in the midst of the vulgarities of society; those who make virtue beautiful, and draw us to it,—who can repay the services of such as these? Men scarcely know what they owe to those who fortify them in virtue; to those who make it plain to them that integrity is safe under all circumstances; to those who have walked before them in the beauty of holiness: to those who have redeemed them from the conception that religion is a bondage, and led them to see that it was an efflorescent garden full of sweet delights. There is among men a great lack of the sense of their obligation toward those who have served them.

And here was this woman to whom Christ had given, by her touch of his garments, leave to be well again. He caused wholesome blood to flow through her veins once more. He restored her to health. And yet she made no outward recognition of what he had done for her. She made no visible sign of thankfulness for the blessing which she had received at his hands. Was it right for her to accept the great bounty of her life and shrink back without acknowledging it? Methinks mere delicacy and fastidiousness; mere caution, mere prudence, a mere waiting to see whether the thing were genuine, restrained her for one single moment from that praise and thanksgiving which should have broken forth from her lips instantly; but our Master read her heart all the time, and was not angry with her, nor did he chide her. He had done her great service, and meant to do her more; and so he stopped the crowd, and turned around and said, “Who touched me?” So great was the crowd that, as they went along with impetuosity, one and another jostled him, and hustled him from side to side continually; and one spoke up (of course it was Peter), and said, “Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, ‘Who touched me?’” Our Saviour did not deign a reply. He stood and *looked round about*! This is an instance of the exhibition of the searching power of the eye of Christ. And you will recollect another place where, when he was told that his mother and his brethren desired to see him, he looked round about on the multitude, and said, “Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?” If you will notice those little expressions which represent him as *looking*, or *looking round*, you will find that some of the weightiest humanities of Christ were effected by his throwing himself into a position in which he searched the multitude with

his eye, and gave a look which added emphasis to his instruction.

So in this case, he looked around upon the crowd, and his eye rested on the woman, and he said, "Who touched me?" She could keep back no longer. The secret was out. She who had felt the virtue of healing felt also the searching power of his eye; and when she found there was no longer any concealment, her feelings gave way, and with a gush of enthusiasm she rushed forward, and cast herself down before him, and told him her whole story. She told him how sick she had been; how much she had suffered; what she had heard of him; what she had purposed to do; how she had done it; and what had come to pass. It was a sweet confession; but it was not half so sweet as the benignity and the paternal benediction which fell from the lips of the Saviour—"Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague." This is the very majesty of tenderness and gentleness.

I hardly need to pause and make an application of this—the necessity which every man is under of confessing that which he receives from the touch of the Divine Spirit. It is right for you to live moral lives, and virtuous lives, and spiritual lives. Not only is it right, but you are under obligation to do it, and it is your highest happiness. No man has a right to arrogate to his own skill that which he succeeds in doing. And especially when men are living in the light of hope; when they are filled with the power of that life which they know is divine; when it is by faith of God's pardoning mercy through Jesus Christ that they feel their souls to be cheered; when they look away through the grave and see eternal mansions, and are able to call them their own,—then they have no right to be dumb or mute. To be so would be ungrateful.

I do not mean that every person must, of necessity, rise up in the household of faith and make a literal declaration or explication; but I hold that every father and mother in the family should bear witness to the children that their Christian lives are lived by faith of the Son of God. I hold that no man in society who is living a life which he is conscious is inspired by God's Spirit has any right to withhold that testimony.

This is the very way in which the Gospel is to be preached. It is by the vital power of Christian souls exerted upon other souls that the work of God's grace among men is to be carried forward. And he that receives divine help and never owns it; he that is from day to day healed of selfishness, and restrained in pride, and lifted higher on the heavenly road, and makes no confession of his faith

in the Lord Jesus Christ, and bears no testimony of his obligation, is not without guilt. It is every man's duty, for his own sake, to honor Christ by witnessing that the life which he lives in the flesh, he lives by faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave himself for him.

There is another thought to which I wish to give expression in connection with this subject. We read that when our Saviour, on one occasion, was preaching in the synagogue, there was present a man with a withered hand. It was on the Sabbath-day, and the Saviour was there in his professional character ; and it is to be supposed that persons reading how he called on the man to stretch forth his hand, and healed him, would say, "This was all right : it was on Sunday, and in the synagogue, and he was teaching ; and it was proper that a miracle should be performed." But, on the occasion of which we are speaking, Christ was not in the synagogue, and it was not the Sabbath-day. It was on the road, and on some other day of the week. He was going on a special errand. But never was there a time when he was so engaged in any duty that he could not stop and do good. There never was a moment in which it was not safe to appeal to his kindness and love. He never let men wait, unless by waiting the blessing was to be reduplicated.

There was another instance in which persons on the road, and having an errand, did not stop to do good. I refer to the parable of the Good Samaritan. There were a priest and a levite, engaged in the same service as our Master, who were on a professional errand, which they regarded as too important to be interrupted for the performance of an act of humanity. A poor fellow, robbed, beaten, cast down, wounded and half dead, lay on the ground, and the priest seeing him, *passed by*. He would have stopped, doubtless, if he had not had something else to do ; but he had an errand, and he went on. A levite came and *looked on him* ; but looking on a man does not help him. He had something to do, he was on a journey, and he could not stop to take care of all the wretched folks that were on the road ; and he went on. But a Samaritan *went where he was, and had compassion on him, and took care of him*.

Here were the priest and the levite, who were on professional errands, and could not stop ; but our Master was on a more urgent errand than theirs. Jairus had a little daughter, twelve years old—the very witching age ; the very time when the child hovers between girlhood and womanhood, and when the deepest sympathies are touched in her behalf ; and he said, "She lieth at the point of death." The Saviour's duty was plain ; the appeal was one which he could not disregard ; and he had a right to say, "I am in haste,

I must speed on my way for another purpose:" but this poor woman found him ready, surcharged; and the power of his healing touch struck through her, and restored her.

Brethren, every Christian man and every Christian woman should carry with them such a healing power, such an overflowing love, such wealth of goodness and piety, that when others come to them for help, there shall instantly, if I may so say, be a back-action of sympathy, which shall bless them, as this woman was blessed by Christ's healing power.

We shall meet her hereafter. We know not her name or her history. Doubtless her voice has long mingled with the choral songs of heaven. She can say, "By his power was I redeemed from bodily sin, but by his greater power was I redeemed from the sins of the soul." She has gone up to be with Christ; her record is with God; and those who have trusted in the same Saviour have found the same release, and the same resurrection, and are in glory.

Are there none here to-night who have burdened consciences? Are there none here who are drooping with fear? Are there none who are suffering from the anguish of remorse? Are there none who have wandered far away from God? Are there none who have undone their souls? Are there none to whom the Saviour may be a benefactor? Venture upon him. Speak to him. Fall down before him. Ask the touch of saving grace at his hands. Or, if your heart fail, communicate your desire by any sign or token. It needs not any great exhibition. A look, oftentimes, is more eloquent, and pleads more, than any words. A touch upon the very garment of the Saviour, in her exigency, was all-sufficient in the case of this woman. When the very back of Christ was turned upon her, she knew how to invoke saving health from him.

That same Christ is still in power, and is still healing. He is your Christ and my Christ, your Saviour and my Saviour; and if any soul is despondent, dying, struck through and through with the disease of sin, I preach to you the salvation which is by faith of the Son of God. Go to him, and cast yourself on his mercy and goodness. He will not fail you. He will save you here, and redeem you with an everlasting salvation in the kingdom of his glory.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE thank thee, O Lord, that thou art faithful to thy promises, and dost exceeding abundantly more than we ask or think. But what thou hast done we know not; for we do not understand thy way of working. We do not understand how thy Spirit doth fulfil its mission, and how our souls are made stronger, and richer, and wiser, and better. We do not understand how thou dost temper us. We cannot measure, with any knowledge that we now have, what is thy work, what is all its significance, nor what is its hope and promise. For thou art working wondrously, though silently. In the secret recesses of our nature, thy Spirit dwells. Thou art teaching us to repress that which is evil, and to develop that which is good. Thou art inspiring us with a desire to live by faith, and not by sight; by hope, and not by fruition. Thou art more and more leading us toward thyself, in aspiration—in thoughts of perfectness. Thou art teaching the people patience, and long-suffering, and kindness, and forbearance. Thou art hardening them to the work of life; and through many stripes and chastisements thou art loving them. Thou art teaching them to bear the yoke and to carry the burden. Thou art teaching them to endure hardships. Thou art repressing the eager desires of their nature, and teaching them to live in contentment with such things as they have, so that they shall draw more and more by faith from the eternal sphere. Thou art teaching them as good servants to do the work of life, and perform all its functions as they are laid upon them by thy providence; and thou art building up by them the household of faith.

We thank thee that thou art teaching men how to be faithful; how in all their affairs to maintain integrity; how to serve their fellow men by their lives. We thank thee that thou art teaching some to maintain their walk and conversation in the midst of abounding prosperities. We thank thee that thou art teaching the world that it is not needful that happiness should seduce men, and take them away from the service of God. We do not know what seed thou art sowing, nor how it grows night and day, nor what shall be the fruit of it in the time to come. We rejoice to believe that all thy dealings with us in this world are only to be read and understood in the other life. Joy is not always joyful, and sorrow is not always sorrowful. Whom thou lovest thou chastenest, and scourgest every son whom thou receivest.

We pray, O Lord, that we may have faith to believe that, rewarding us or punishing us, exalting us or pressing us down, thine office and work is to make us worthy to be called the sons of God, and to prepare us to go from this sphere to another and higher one, where nobler tasks and nobler lives await us.

We pray that thou wilt draw near to all who are present to-night, and open their understandings to divine truth. Draw near, we pray thee, to all who are in trouble; to all who are burdened; to all who feel remorse for sin; to all who are filled with anxiety, and doubt, and fear; to all who are weary and ready to perish; to all whose faith and perseverance are well nigh spent.

We pray that thou wilt be a merciful Saviour in our midst to-night. Draw by the sweetness of thine invitation those who linger far from thee. Remind of their vows those that have promised in times gone by to serve thee—some in sickness, some in great vicissitudes, some in dangers imminent. May they look to thee for strength to enable them to fulfill the vows and promises which they have uttered.

We pray for any who have wandered. Bring them back again. We pray for those who do not pray for themselves. We pray for the prayerless

children of praying parents. We pray for those who have forsaken the sanctuary of their fathers, and forgotten their fathers' God, and have departed from virtue, and sought their own ends, and done their own will, and tasted the bitter fruits of disobedience, and are looking wistfully toward the old way and the established paths. Are there not such in thy presence? and wilt not thou whose providence has graciously brought them hither go on with thy work? We pray that they may have their eyes opened, and their consciences unsealed; that the word of God may come to them to-night with searching power and with convincing and comforting influence.

We pray that thou wilt go forth with pitying thoughts to all those for whom we should pray, and to all those whom we delight to pray for. Remember our absent friends, wherever they are. Remember all who have labored with us in thy cause. Be with all those in every land who are preaching Christ to-day. Strengthen, we beseech thee, those in obscure and waste places who are discouraged by the greatness of the way.

We pray that thy kingdom may be advanced everywhere, at home and abroad, on continents and on the isles of the sea; and that the name of Jesus may be uttered in every land. May darkness flee away from his presence. Come and fulfill those promises which seem so long in ripening. Fill the whole earth with thy salvation.

And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be the praise forever more. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon the word spoken. May we rejoice not in ourselves, but in the great power and goodness of our ascended Saviour. Though thou hast gone up on high, thou art everywhere; and no cry, how feeble soever it may be, fails to reach thine ear. No heart, wherever it may be, that flies to thee with uplifted hand of supplication, is without thine attention. None bemoan their hardness, their sinfulness, their everlasting want, which cannot be medicated by time nor by their own skill and knowledge, and come to thee, and venture on thee, and trust thee, and go away unhealed. Blessings be upon thy name, O thou ascended Jesus! What mercies hast thou shaken down! Thy paths drop fatness! Through the ages, how many poor, how many ignorant, how many that were ready to perish, have been saved! What multitudes hast thou gathered! Still thou art gathering; and innumerable heroes shall yet rise up from the peopled earth to praise thee. May our souls take part with theirs. May we meet thee in the air, and claim thy healing power, and receive health in our souls, and confess it. May we believe in thee, and be received by thee into thy kingdom at last. And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

GOD'S MERCY INDEPENDENT OF SECTS OR CHURCHES.

"And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, etc."—*Acts xxii. 21-23.*

This was piety. These were God's people. These were Jews. They were vindicating their religion. They were defending the sanctity of the temple. They were showing how much they valued orthodoxy. They were zealous; and a pretty work they made of their zeal. We must go back a little, to understand it fully.

We read, in the chapter preceding this, that Paul, after he had preached about thirty years, and was approaching the termination of his career, went back to Jerusalem; when James, and the other elders that were there, informed him that there was a great prejudice existing in the Church at Jerusalem, because he had apparently broken off from Jewish customs and the Jewish worship, and, as it were, set up another Church for himself. The language is unmistakable:

"They are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs."

What advice did they give him, assuming it to be untrue that he did not believe in the Mosaic ceremony, and rating him as a faithful adherent of the Jewish Church and customs? They advised him to go into the temple, with certain others who had a vow upon them, to have sacrifice made for himself when sacrifice was made for them, and to pay charges in the sight of the people; so that everybody should have positive testimony that Paul, when he had preached thirty years, still believed in the Jewish Church, and did not believe that, to become a Christian, he must necessarily separate himself from Judaism.

Well, the apostle, for the sake of quieting the Church in Jerusalem, went into the temple, and performed expiatory rites. It is very hard steering, where the channel is narrow, so that if you avoid the rocks on one side, you are not in danger of being swept by the current on the other; and so it befel Paul; for while he was thus in the temple, acting under the advice of the Christian elders, the Jews that did not believe in Christ saw him there, and raised a great commotion.

"When the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, crying out, Men of Israel, help; this is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place." "And all the city was moved, and the people ran together; and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple; and forthwith all the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar; who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them; and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating Paul. Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude; and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. And the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him. And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had given him license, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defense which I make now unto you."

What a power there is in language! These men had been accustomed from the cradle, to hear everything that belonged to the heart and the hearth spoken in the Hebrew tongue; and when this man spoke to them in that, their mother tongue, it is said, "They kept the more silence." It hushed them, so that a whisper might have been heard. Then he gives them some account of his conversion. They were interested in that; for everybody likes to hear personal narratives. He got on very well, and was evidently swaying them somewhat to his mind, when he fell upon this unlucky sentence:

"I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee. And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by and consenting unto his death, and kept

the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

There is no power in that to us, but there was power in it to them, and a tremendous explosion ensued :

"They gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: it is not fit that he should live."

And then, after the manner of the Jews, they "cast off their clothes and threw dust into the air;" thus expressing their utter indignation.

You have seen, perhaps, how the enraged bull in the pasture paws, and throws dirt upon himself, bellowing, as he prepares himself for battle. The wild beast that was in these men took gesture and posture scarcely different. Red-faced, fiery-eyed, and fierce, they surrounded the steps of the castle of the chief captain, and demanded that this man should be slain. For what purpose? What had he done? Why, he had said that God had sent him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. That is all. Preaching to the Gentiles was his offense. You do not see it. You cannot imagine it. I think you will, before I am done with this discourse, imagine pretty nearly what the feeling is; for although in you it does not take precisely this historic form, I think you will understand the feeling that prompted them.

Now, if Paul had said that the Gentiles were all to be gathered into the Church, and were to bow down and acknowledge the name of Jehovah, and that he was sent forth to bring them into submission to the Jews, they would have smiled, and with eager exultation, with hallelujahs, peradventure, they would have claimed him; for, from the earliest period, they had been wont to believe that the day would come when the Jewish God would reign over all the earth. Were not all lands to be given to them? Were they not to sit regnant and brilliant upon the summit of authority? Were they not to do to other nations what other nations had done to them? Were not the scorn and humiliation and degradation which they had suffered to be paid double? Were not they the people of God? And were not the prophets all aglow with the prediction that the time would come when, by the light of the Jewish religion, Jehovah should be made known, and should be worshiped in all the earth?

Ah! there was no prejudice against having the Gentiles made—what? Jews: but to have the Jewish God given to the Gentiles without the instrumentality of the Jews; to have their God distributed outside of themselves by another instrumentality; to have other people enjoy the same right in Jehovah that they did, stand-

ing on the same level,—this was what they could not endure. To carry the Jews' God out from Judea, and make him a God of the Romans, and of the Greeks, and of the Scythians, and of the Parthians, and of the Assyrians—that was what offended them.

National gods, in old times, were very valuable property. It used to be supposed that the gods of a nation were very much to it what armies and navies are to a nation now-a-days. It was supposed that they defended it; that they took care of it; that they hated other nations that were its adversaries. The idea that Jehovah was a national God, and that he was the God of the Jews, who did not wish their enemies to participate in his power or in his protection, runs through all Jewish history.

If one should come into your house, and take all your pictures, and books, and furniture, and provisions, and distribute them along the whole street, you would doubtless raise some objection; if one should come to my table, and receive hospitality at my hands, and then take all my property and scatter it up and down the street, I should not like it; and men felt very much so about their religion in those old times. It was a part of their national household goods. The Jews' idea was that God was their special property; and to give the world the same right in him that they had, was just so much to defraud them.

The Jews were peculiarly susceptible to these ideas of appropriation, because, for the sake of their faith, and in order to defend the name of Jehovah against idolatry, they had suffered much persecution, and undergone many hardships.

You will observe that when men propound truths which are not popular, and defend them, and they begin to be popular, they claim to be their special guardians. "It is our faith," they say. You shall hear certain parties saying of others who have adopted their principles, "They are coming over to our ground." So in religion, when men have set forth views that are unwelcome, but true, and other men at last begin to accept them, they say, "We had the right of it. Did not we tell you they would have to take our views?"

Men appropriate truth to themselves; they make it personal, as if they owned it; as if it belonged to them; and so the Jews felt that, as they had defended Jehovah, doubtless he must be grateful to them; that as they had suffered for him, they had a right to parcel him out; that he ought to be a gift from them; and to use Jehovah as the property of all mankind, was to level the Jew to the plane of other men. This would be humiliation and disgrace to them, since they felt themselves to be ineffably superior to the rest

of the world ; and they would not bear the degradation, if they could help it.

The spirit of the Jews in this respect is nowhere more strongly exposed and more keenly rebuked than in the interview between Christ and the Syro-Phenician woman, when she asked for the healing of her daughter, and his disciples besought him to send her away. He answered her, saying, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs"—referring to the fact that she was not a Jew. The Jews felt that if men were not Jews they were not much better than dogs. They thought about the Gentiles very much as the members of one Christian sect do about those of another, in our day. The Syro-Phenician woman said, "Truth, Lord ; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." And then Christ, in the benignity of his nature, granted her request.

From the outbreak of religious intolerance and religious cruelty reecorded in the text we may learn several lessons.

First, it is possible to hold religion in a malignant spirit. So long as religion is understood to be an external system of ceremonies, laws, usages, ordinances ; so long as it consists of a series of beliefs ; so long as it is an objective thing, embodied in usages and institutions, or in philosophical creeds ; so long as it appeals to the outward senses,—it is quite possible to cherish it at the same time with those feelings which belong to the bigoted partisan.

Unfortunately, that which we have seen among the Jews, we have never ceased to see among men who have held the great institutions of Christianity, or institutions that have purported to be Christian,—that they held them in rancor, pride, and selfishness, and defended them with bitterness. Christ was one who, "being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men ; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He was a sufferer, who died for his enemies ; who died imploring blessings upon his persecutors ; whose mission to earth was good will and peace ; who shed his own blood, but never a drop of the blood of another. He was the loving, atoning Saviour. And what has been the history of the Church that represented his disinterested suffering, the bounty of his love, and his benignity to his hating and hateful enemies ? The long record of Church history has been a record almost unvarying of arrogance, and pride, and violence, and persecution. Men have received the religion of Jesus Christ, just as the Jews re-

received the religion of the Old Testament, to hold it in carnal bonds with most malignant human passions.

Is the same spirit existing now which broke out in this tumult among the Jews? Do men hold religion in the same malignant way that they did? Is there the same jealousy in respect to the partition of the benefits of Christ that there was in respect to the diffusion of the knowledge of Jehovah? What has been the history of the sects? and what is to-day the feeling of the sects? Is the Roman Catholic Church unwilling that all the world shall have all the benefits of the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ? Oh, no. The Roman Catholic Church stands saying to all the world, "Come into our Church, and under our regulations, and you shall have the Saviour. But you cannot have the Saviour outside of our Church. Come to us and you shall have him, but you cannot have him and leave us out."

Are the derivative churches, are the hierarchal churches, are the Protestant churches, in spirit, different from the Roman Catholics? Are good men, learned men, wise men, unwilling that Christ should be preached among the Gentiles—that is, among dissenters? Oh, no. Is the Episcopal Church unwilling that the truth of Jesus should be made known to outsiders? Oh, no. It is more than desirous that they should all have the bounty and blessing that is in Christ; but then they must have it in the true Church. They must have it in the line of apostolicity. "Suppose," it is asked, "one should come to the Saviour without coming in that line, would there be any hope for him?" "Very doubtful. Possibly there might; the mystery of God is great; nobody can tell what he may do; but it is very unsafe to trust to any other channel. Take him in the Church, and you will be sure to be safe; but if you take him outside, you run a great risk." This is all the encouragement we get from that source.

Well, let us take the great Calvinistic Presbyterian Church. May any one have Christ's atoning mercy, and the hope of everlasting life? Yes, if he believes in the absolute sovereignty of God; in original sin, with enough of actual transgression added to it; in regeneration; in the efficacious compassion and suffering and death of Christ; in divine penalty; and in the eternity of future punishment. "Come into our creed," says that church, "and you shall have the mercy and blessing of God." "Yes, but," says a Unitarian to the Calvinist, "is not God my God?" "What! your God? Yours? What is your belief? Do you believe as we do?" "No, I do not." "Well, no man has a right to call himself a Christian who does not believe in the fundamental doctrine. Come into our

creed, and then God will be your God, and Christ will be your Christ; but if you stay where you are, off from our ground, there is no God for you, and no Christ. What have you Gentiles to do with our Presbyterian God and Christ?"

There are orthodox Congregational churches, with good sound deacons, and wise, intelligent laymen in them. How is it with them? There is a great outside world of men who scarcely know the sabbath, or go to church, or attempt to follow Christ in any way. What is their feeling? What is your feeling? How were you educated? How was I educated? You feel that all who have been brought to believe in the right doctrine (your doctrine, that is), the right ecclesiastical economy, are Christians.

Now, may a man who does not believe in the eternity of punishment, may a man who has doubts in respect to the mode of atonement, may a man who is a Swedenborgian, a Unitarian, a Universalist, or a Jew, may a man who has no special religious culture, say that God is his God, and have hope in him? "No," you say; "if he will give evidence of holding the right views, if he will come over to our ground, if he will comply with our requisitions, then Christ will be ready to receive him. We have Christ with us. Whoever comes here can have him, but he cannot go out there to them."

It is the Jewish state of mind over again. It is the same spirit which they manifested who shook their raiment, and threw dust in the air, and clenched their hands, and gnashed their teeth, and cried out against Paul, and demanded that he should be torn to pieces. They were advocating Jehovah, standing up for God, taking care of religion; and every one of them would have said, "We desire that every human creature on earth should have the blessing of God only he must come to us and get it; it will be presumptuous, audacious, awful, for him to hope for anything from God if he does not come to us."

In this regard, human nature is pretty much the same all the way through. There is everywhere the same conceit; the same arrogance; the same exclusiveness. "What we have is right. Of that there is no mistake. And for those who are outside our ecclesiastical connection, and are not of our way of believing, there is nothing but darkness."

It may be true that men are in a dangerous condition, it may be true that they need light; but that does not excuse the feeling with which men carry what are called the doctrines of grace, in which you believe, and in which I believe, but which we may hold in an unchristian spirit, in a selfish spirit, in a spirit of

overweening pride, in a spirit not to be distinguished from that of the worst political parties in the world.

What, then, is the truth? God, as he has taught both in the Old Testament and in the New, is *God over all, blessed forever*; and all men, from the rising of the sun until the going down of the same, have children's rights in God as their Father. All men have a right to take part and lot in him, and to hope in him. This is the doctrine of the Bible; and I think it is the doctrine of a just, and right, and true Christian love.

God is the God of all the earth. He belongs to no sect, to no party. He has given to no class the right to appropriate him. He has given to none the authority to parcel him out, or to administer his promises.

There is not a creature on the face of the earth that is not dear to God. We are accustomed to think that Christians have God, while the heathen have him not; but do you know that seven men out of every ten on the face of the earth are heathen? And do you believe that God brings into life generations, in numbers as countless as the drops of the sea, or as the drops of dew; do you believe that God creates the vast uncountable multitude of mothers, fathers, children, young men and maidens, swarming through Africa, through Asia, through all the latitudes of the world, and that only two or three out of every ten are his children, all the rest, as they are brought in through successive ages—myriads, myriads, myriads of them—being nothing to him? Is not God One who “maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”? You might as well appropriate the rain, and parcel out the sunshine, and say that none shall have one or the other except on social and moral conditions, as to say that none shall have God, or Christ, or hope, or salvation, except such as hold a certain belief, or belong to a given sect. They are universal, and belong to whosoever will take them.

God is the God of every human being on earth, no matter whether he worships in this temple or in that, in this attitude or in that; no matter whether he belongs to the true church, or a dissenting church, or no church at all; no matter whether he speaks the language of Zion or not. There is not a man in the world, whether he be rich or poor, high or low, good or bad, toward whom God's feelings are not feelings of the utmost benignity and loving mercy. God is long-suffering and gentle toward the Ethiopian, the Calmuck, the Indian of the forest, the most benighted races on the globe, as well as toward the most favored

nations. There is not a man so imperfect, or so full of infirmity, that God does not care for him and sustain him ; and the best men living are pensioners on divine grace and bounty. If God takes the worthiest of his creatures, out of the fullness of his own graciousness, and not on account of their desert, can he not take the others also, out of that same graciousness ? And does he not take them ? The whole tide of the divine thought through the world is a thought of goodness ; the whole heart-beat of God along the earth is a heart-beat of mercy ; and that thought, that heart-beat, is for all mankind. God is working for them, he is shaping his providences for their benefit, and that just as much when he chastises them as when he gives them pleasure. He is preparing them for something better than this life. God is the workman of heaven. He is a God of versatile industry, and great patience, working everywhere, in every region, for righteousness ; to develop it, and nourish it, and bring it to a higher and higher level, that the whole earth may see his salvation.

“ Well, then, do I understand,” you will say, “ that an unconverted man is as good as a converted man ? ” No, I do not say that, at all. But if you were to ask me, “ Who owns the sun ? ” I should say, “ Nobody owns it ; it belongs to the globe, and everybody has a right to it.”

Here are men that go down to the great deep, and do business upon its mighty waters ; they understand all the currents, all the obstructions, all the winds, all the signs in the heavens, and all the tokens on the earth ; and they make long and successful voyages. But there goes out on the ocean a man without compass, or chart, or experience, in a rickety boat : has he not a right to go out thus ? Certainly. Has he the same chance of success that the men have who go out with experience, and all these other helps ? Oh no, he has not the same chance ; but he has the same right to go.

Here are men who are surrounded by ten thousand climatic influences which may be turned to good account ; but they never reap ample harvests. Why ? Because they do not know how to make use of those influences in cultivating the soil. Those who do, sow their seed, and reap abundant harvests. There is a vast difference in the results of these men’s farming ; and yet, the sun stands offering as much to one as to another.

Now, it is with God’s mercy as it is with the sunlight. What does the sunlight bless ? It blesses industry, integrity, knowledge. It is ready to bless everybody who will partake of its bounty. The right to it is not conferred by magistrate, legislature or gov-

ernment. Sunlight is everybody's ; and yet, everybody does not get good out of it. It is shame to some ; it is torment to others ; it is rebuke to others ; and it is blessing, endless and fathomless, to yet others. Whether it is beneficial to a person or not depends upon how he uses it.

The mother loves her children ; and yet has that recreant son who has burst the bonds of parental authority, and gone to associate with gamblers and men of license, the same benefit from that mother's love which those children have who cling to her ? Has her heart forsaken him and forgotten him ? Does not her heart go out after that son, and does she not offer prayer after prayer to God in behalf of the wanderer ? That mother is not the same to him that she is to the other children ; but the cause of the difference is in him, and not in her.

God's love and mercy and bounty are universal, and men appropriating them find them personally useful ; but rejected and excluded, they find them not good.

Two men are walking in a garden. One walks in the alleys, and everywhere sweet and pleasant shade falls upon him ; the fragrance of the orange greets him on every side ; he enjoys all the beauty of prodigal luxuriance ; he is surrounded by blossoming flowers and ripening fruits ; and to him it is a garden of grand delights. The other man lies drunk under the shade of a tree. There are the same fruits, the same flowers, the same fragrance for him that there is for the other man, only he is not in a condition to appropriate them. One goes out of the garden full of gladness, and laden with its treasures. The other has no more of the garden than if he had never seen it. It is the nature of the men, and not any partiality in the garden, that makes the difference.

We are prepared, then, to answer some questions.

May an unconverted man pray to God ? This is a question which has disturbed many persons. Some think that when they are Christians they have a right to pray, but not till then. But why may not any one pray to God ? What is there in nature or reason that should hinder ? Praying is itself an act of submission. It recognizes sovereignty and authority. The desire to pray is not altogether selfish. It is associated with an acknowledgement of divinity. And does a man need to go through a technical experience inside of a church before he has a right to pray to God ? There is no man that wants to pray who has not a right to pray.

But can a man who has an unsanctified heart make a prayer that shall be acceptable to God ? Do you suppose there is a man who ever utters a prayer, every sentence of which is not stained with pride

and selfishness and infirmity? And is there not a spirit which "maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered"? Is it true that God has fenced himself about so that those who have gone away from him cannot get back?

If my child had wandered from me, and dishonored my name, and wrought mischief, and, after many years, had come back in poverty, and I heard his voice, at midnight, saying, "Father, let me in," is there anything in my fatherhood, low and ignoble as it is, comparatively, which would not be stirred? If he said, "I have sinned, and I am in want, and I have come back for help: help me," would I cast him off? Is there a father here that would cast off such a child? And is there a creature on the face of the earth that has sunk so deep in wickedness that, if he cries out to God for help, God will not hear him and help him? If you are weighed down by sin, and you wish to be saved, though you are almost sure that you will fall under temptation to-morrow, you have a right to lift up your voice, and cry, "God help me." God is sorry for men, even while he is chastising them for their sins.

You remember how, in that inimitable parable of the Prodigal Son, when he had gone away from his father's house, and wasted his substance with harlotry and riotous living, in his deep degradation, at last, he came to himself, and said, "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

There is earthly paternity, taken as a symbol and emblem of the divine feeling. When men have gone wrong, and are in rags, in beggary, in degradation, the moment they turn the face of desire toward God, that moment God meets them, and does exceeding abundantly more for them than they can ask or think.

Take heart, then, sinning, wicked, desponding man! If there is nobody else that cares for you, God cares for you. If every tongue is out against you; if all manner of prejudices hedge up your way; if the church has surrounded you with obstacles, God thinks of you, and will help you. You have an interest in the heart of Jesus; and if God be for you, who can be against you? Therefore, take courage.

You are not a churchman? You are not much educated in matters of religion? Ah, but you know something of sin. You have

felt its pang. You desire to be released from its grasp. And you are not aware how strong is the mercy of God, and what right you have in Christ. A sinner no right in God ! Think a moment, my friend. What is God but a spirit ? He is not limited to any place. He is not a regnant sovereign with crown and scepter ; with officers and revenues ; with an army and navy : he is a Spirit. He is just and merciful and loving. And has not a sinner a right to justice and mercy and love ? Has he not a right to a Saviour ? May he not partake of divine goodness ? Especially has he not a right to invoke God's blessing ?

It is because God is what he is, that all men have rights in him. It once used to be said that men had no rights which God was bound to respect. A better thought has come over the Christian community. Men have rights ; God gave them, and they are at liberty to exercise them. Has not a child rights, because his parent is his superior, and has authority over him ? The law says, Yes ; public sentiment says, Yes ; and the voice of nature says, Yes. And because a man is formed subordinate to God, and under his authority, has he not rights of mercy, of justice, of love, and of truth ?

May we hope, then, that the dissolute and the wicked shall have mercy ? Not while they employ their dissoluteness and wickedness cheerfully and gladly as the end and purpose of their life. There is not a man that lives who has not a right to food, and, through food, to strength, and, through strength, to executive efficiency. Men also have the right to joy—manly joy. Yet, you say to me, “ May a man have joy, though he be an old glutton, swollen with a superabundance of blood ? ” Why, yes ; but not as a glutton. If he will become temperate, and purge away his humors, and restrain himself to due moderation, he may. If I am cold, and wish to protect myself against the weather, I can, if I will seek the proper shelter. If I am shivering on the north side of a rock, I can get warm if I have a mind to, but not so long as I remain on the north side.

There are infinite mercies of God toward men ; and all are wicked, for there is not a man on earth who is righteous, perfectly so, not one. Every man is imperfect in this mortal state. We are working toward a condition of perfection which we hope to reach in other spheres, but not in this. The earth, therefore, is covered with sinful men. Nevertheless, the bounty of God is proffered to each. And it is received and enjoyed by all who take it as it is to be taken,

If, then, there be any here who have looked over the pale of the

church, and felt, "If I could only get in there, I should have hope, but while I stand out here, what hope can I have?" let me tell you that the mercy of God is as much yours out of the church as in it. The condition of divine favor, of pardon, and of salvation, is not that you shall be inside of any church; is not that you shall be Jew or Christian in the sectarian sense; is not that you shall be in the Roman, or Episcopal, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Methodist, or Congregational, or Lutheran, or Unitarian, or Universalist, or any other church. What you want is simple personal sympathy with God, who is above all churches, and who is offered to men without any regard to churches.

It is true that a man may be more likely to come into an intelligent knowledge of God, and his requirements and promises, in the sanctuary than out of it; it is true that there is a provision for moral influence in churches that does not exist outside of them; and far be it from me to say that a church is worthless, but church-membership is not a condition of divine kindness and forgiveness. You have these on account of that which is in God. That which makes him God is that he has a great nourishing bosom, a great glowing soul of love, which he bestows freely upon his creatures. Divine love is a gift. It is never bought, either by obedience, or by moral excellence, or by service rendered, or by right believing. The help which we receive from God is a gift springing out of the infinite resources of his love. But there are external and incidental helps. Churches are helps—not masters; servants—not despots. You are free.

God is the God of all the earth; he is the God of every human being; and nothing separates between you and God but—what? Your creed? No. Your ordinances? No. Your pride and selfishness? Do these turn God sour? No. Nothing separates between you and God but your own will. Here I stand, holding out a handful of gold; but can a man receive that gold unless he comes and puts out his hand and takes it? No. Still the hand is open and held out; and so long as men clench their fists they cannot take it; but if they will open their hands and make the necessary movement, they can.

Do you know that your father and mother wait at home for you? Do you know that the anger is not cool in your bosom which drove you away from them? Do you strive with yourself? Do you say, "I have disgraced myself and them"? and does your pride stand guarding your sense of shame, which is struggling within you? Do you know that your father and mother long for you still? Oh, child! daughter of their love! do you know that day and night

are one long season of yearning on their part for you ? And are you kept away from them, not only by your pride and shame, but by the influence of companions ? And so long as you stay where you are, does it seem to you as if you had no home ? You are deprived of the enjoyments of home, but it is not their fault : it is yours.

Much of God's bounty, and forgiveness, and help, and succor, will come upon you, at any rate, through the incidental influence of divine providence ; but the personal mercies of God, the sweetness of his grace, the effluence of his love—these may be yours, they may succor you, restore you, strengthen you, inspire you, and build you up in time for eternity, *if you will* ; but it all lies with you.

Are there not those here to whom this is a needed gospel ? If there are any who have been taught to believe that they must comply with conditions which seem obnoxious to their reason, and impossible to the nature of the human mind, slough off the old teaching, and come back to the simplicity of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, and say, "Our Father which art in heaven." A soul that can say that, and feel it, is God's. Dismiss all the long inventory of doctrines ; dismiss the Confession and the Creed, for the time being, and bring yourself into personal relations with God, and breathe the language of filial love, at the altar, to the Father—*our* Father.

Are there not those who cannot say that ? Do you think you must make long investigation ; that you must study to find the right church ; that you must endeavor to ascertain what the right doctrines are—what you are to believe ? I tell you, you know enough, a thousand times over, to fit you to begin a Christian life. You know what is just, and pure, and true, and right. You know what is reverent and comely toward God, as your Superior and Father. If you stay away, and do not receive the effulgence of universal bounty, it is because you will not. "I have called : ye have refused. I have stretched out my hand : no man regarded. Ye will not come unto me that ye may have eternal life,"—these are the utterances of sacred truth.

Now may God grant, oh men ! oh women ! moving silently through this world toward the eternal tribunal, and the fixed state, may God grant that, while the flowers are preparing themselves to open and take in the gracious sunlight, you may open your hearts to receive the shining of the Spirit. The voice of God calls. The divine influences wait. The whole heaven is full of love and mercy. And as, while the summer calls to the flowers and the birds, they glow and sing, so may you, when the heavens call to you, rise up, respond, rejoice, and be saved !

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

GREAT is our need of thee, O Lord our God. In every moment of our lives, how great is that kindness of thine by which, before we know our wants, they are supplied! Thy paths drop fatness. The heaven above hath heard thy command to service. The sun, and all the laws of nature are obedient to thy will, and ceaselessly they bring forth the pleasant fruit by which we are provided, day by day, with all that we need. And yet, behind all these causes is our God. Through whatever channel the work is done, thou art the Worker, and by whatever source we are helped, thou art the continual Helper. Thou art the Author, and thou shalt be the Finisher.

We rejoice in thy bounty. We give thanks to thee in the memory of the past. We are drawn to a more implicit trust in thee. Above all, we thank thee for the great grace which is given us through Jesus Christ, by which we have fellowship not only with him, but with the Father; by which we are permitted to enter into the holy of holies. No longer are we kept afar off. We are not strangers or foreigners. We are of the household of faith, brought near. Thou hast said to us, Henceforth I call you, not servants, but friends. We have heard of thy graciousness. Many of us know it. Thou hast spoken to our inward understanding. Thou hast pressed it home upon us that thou dost love us. We are beloved of God. We walk beneath the canopy which thou hast spread above us. No parent so cares for his children as thou dost care for us. Not a sparrow can fall without thy notice. Are not we worth more than many sparrows?

We rejoice in thy providence, and in the administration of nature; and these things are as nothing to the joy that we have in thy personal affection; in the grace of thy love; in the inspiration of thy Spirit; in all the hope which we have through thine immortality and blessedness.

And now, O Lord, we thank thee that since our eyes were opened in this world we have been instructed in these things. We have broken through ignorance slowly, and grown into this knowledge. We thank thee for all those formative influences by which faith is made easier; by which we stand with more implicit confidence; by which we see thee more perfectly, and realize thy presence more easily.

We pray that thou wilt keep us near to thyself, and fill us with all thy divine influences, that we may be able more and more to dismiss and put under our feet whatsoever is carnal,—passion, and appetite, and selfishness, and inordinate pride; and that we may grow more and more toward the majesty of thy love, and its perfect peace, and its fullness of kindness.

And we pray that thou wilt grant, this evening, upon all thy servants gathered together, the blessing which each one specially needs. Be gracious to those who are bending beneath trouble, and sanctify that trouble to them. In their night, shine forth with all thy stars. We pray that thou wilt not leave nor forsake them. Sanctify those wounds which seem to them incurable; those sorrows which they cannot bear, but are bearing.

And we beseech of thee, grant thy blessing upon those who are burdened outwardly, who are perplexed in worldly cares and business; and may they have such confidence and faith in thy providence, that they shall be able to endure manfully to the end.

Bless, we beseech of thee, those who are poor, and are struggling with temptation. Deliver them from evil thoughts and wrong desires. May they be patient, and content to await the evolution of the divine will. Grant that in the midst of doubt, and fear, and disaster, and disappointment, as well as in the midst of joy, and prosperity, and hope, and cheer, every one may be able to find thee a present help.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt glorify thyself among this people

Bless all the families of this city, and the great city near us. Fill us with the divine Spirit. May the Gospel which has made us rich and happy spread through this great land, for the reformation of morals, and for the diffusion of knowledge.

Establish wise laws, for wise magistracy, and for the peace of the people.

We pray that thou wilt bless, not our nation alone, but all the nations of the earth. They wait for thee. They bear heavy burdens. Many walk in wickedness and in darkness. Oh, hasten that time when the power of God among men shall produce justice, and love, and when peace shall flow through all the domains of men.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Make bare thine arm of power. Come forth in the brightness of thy love. Overthrow thine enemies; lead them in blessed captivity; and reign in all the earth as thou dost in heaven.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore *Amen*.

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we pray that thy truth may search out all that are within the sound thereof, and that it may enter into the heart. As the heat enters into the soil, to cause it to bring forth all its hidden treasures, so may the light of thy truth pierce every heart, and bring forth gracious affections. Teach all that are thine how dear they are to thee. May the love of God constrain them. May they accept the bounty and mercy of God in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Bless us as we sing again. Go home with us. Sanctify our homes. Prepare us in these earthly habitations for those mansions above, where thou art.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be the praise. *Amen*.

FAITHFULNESS TO CONVICTION, THE BASIS OF RIGHT ACTION.

“Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.”—Rom. xiv. 5.

The Jews were brought up not without ideas of spiritual religion; but their thought of spiritual religion was so harnessed to ceremonial observances, to ritual systems, to a thousand external acts, to processions, and feasts, and sacrifices, and washings, which had come, in their thought, to signify religious quality, that when Christ taught a pure spiritual religion, and they began to emancipate themselves, there would arise, of necessity, a thousand ethical difficulties.

We experience, in a slight degree, but only in a slight degree, something of the same troubles which they had, in our attempt to maintain ordinances, and yet, to be set free from ordinances. We believe that baptism is a useful ceremony or service; but we teach that it is not an indispensable one. We believe that the seventh day, as a day of rest, is a bounty and a blessing; but we hold that no man has authority to command it, and that we are free upon that day. We hold to religious observances—to meetings, and various institutions; but we also hold that they are our servants—that none of them are our masters.

Now, if you multiply a thousandfold the few and simple services which we have, you can conceive what the condition of the Jew was, who at every step had some religious duty to observe which had been rendered superstitiously sacred in his sight; and who, when he attempted to break away from his old beliefs, customs and usages, was in danger of violating his conscience.

The 14th of Romans deals largely with this subject, in one or other of its phases:

“Him that is weak in the faith receive ye; but not to doubtful disputations [not to disputations that breed doubt]. For one believeth that he

may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

That is to say, let all these questions which you are called upon to settle, not be hastily, heedlessly settled. Do not take any liberty which seems to you to be wrong. Forbear what others practice, if you cannot see your way clear to follow their example. To him that thinketh it to be sin, it is sin. That is, it has the same effect upon his conscience that an actual sin would have.

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Make up your mind; let it be a deliberate, rational, moral conviction under which you act; and then boldly and earnestly follow the course that is marked out for you.

Now, *being fully persuaded in one's own mind* is a matter which has assumed various proverbial forms; and there is one of them that I want to talk about to-night—for there is a phrase that is its equivalent, namely: "Let every man be true to himself." Paul said, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;" others have said, "Follow your convictions;" but the common expression in our time is, "Let every man be true to himself."

There are circumstances under which such a declaration as this, which has become very current, so that you hear it everywhere now, has a peculiar meaning. To one who is stepping out into the affairs of life, it is said, "Now be true to your own self." A young artist is reminded that it is a great thing to be true to one's self. As a lawyer or doctor enters upon the practice of his profession, men gather about him, to give him encouragement and advice, and some kind old man, intelligent and thoughtful, says, "I have but one thing to say to you: in your conflict with the world, be true to yourself." But of course being true to one's self depends upon what the person is. It may be good or bad, wise or foolish.

How did such a phrase as this come to be used in any beneficial way?

There have been times in which communities had sunk down into sloth—into a sort of dead contentment. There have been times when enterprise was, comparatively speaking, unknown; when men had read little and thought less; when religion, for the most part, was a repetition of things over and over again, almost in the same words and phrases; when philosophy was not found to enter into men's ways and customs; when their tastes were low;

when they conformed to public usages ; when their range of life was very narrow, and they moved around in it mechanically ; when no person was bold enough to be original, and nobody needed originality, and everybody was baptized into his beliefs and opinions, and everything went on in a servile and ignoble routine.

Now, under such circumstances, it is a good and wholesome thing for a man to come in, and break up the fallow-ground, and stir men up, and make them grow, and inspire them with curiosity, and ripen that curiosity into investigation, and make them long for other views of truth, for nobler patterns and ideals of life, and rouse the dry bones that may be lying in the valley of vision.

Where this takes place, men are exhorted not to be servile followers of precedent ; not forever to yield allegiance to custom ; not always to do just what everybody else has done ; but to think, to be competent to think, to wake up their manhood, to develop what is in them, to grow everywhere and in every direction. When there is resurrection from sloth, from stupidity, and from a base conformity to and a daily continuity in a vulgar life, then there is a great deal of nobility in the maxim, "Be true to yourself." Do not follow the community. Do not mix up with everybody, so that there is no difference between you and others. God never made all men alike. He never meant them all to be alike. He made them competent to differ ; and the glory of life is not in conformities, but in differences and peculiarities of character. There is reason for differences in the various departments of life. There is reason in art : do not be Byzantine ; do not let every picture that you make be a copy of some other. There is reason in literature : do not write the same things that have been written ; do not reflect the thoughts of others ; do not let your ideas be stereotyped ; do not take in truths of theology, or other truths, in a dogmatic or fixed form. That would imply that the truth was in its coffin, and not in its natural state, which is always a state of differentiation, and advance, and growth.

Out of this comes separateness. Men wake up and begin to live. It passes to the second state, which is one of danger—namely, the making of men obstinate. We need, therefore, to guard them against the dangers arising from being true to themselves under given circumstances. It is necessary that one should have a self. It is necessary that one should have individuality. It is necessary that one should have his own personality so marked that he can be told from another man, everywhere and in everything. Life loves variety ; God loves variety ; and men do, when they are alive. When they are in a genuine condition, they should have an individual char-

acter; and it should be real. It should spring from their fundamental qualities, and from the education that these qualities have received, in the providence of God.

But then, to be true to yourself, you must have an understanding that there is a devilish self and a divine self in every man; and you must have a distinct understanding as to which of these two selves you are going to be true to—as to which of them shall receive your obedience and your conscientious observance.

Men are born with animal natures. There is no difference between modern and ancient philosophers in their opinion on this point, that we inherit animal natures. It is a settled thing among all observers, that the same basilar instincts which exist in animals inhere also in men. There is the same fierce, destructive nature in men that there is in the lion and tiger. There is the same combative nature in man that there is in the wolf and the dog in their wild state. There is the same cunning, artful nature in men that there is in the fox. All the qualities in the animal kingdom by which they defend themselves, and make their way in life, we see reproduced in men.

Now this lower, this basilar, this animal self, no man can afford to be true to in any such sense as to follow it, pamper it, and make it supreme. Shall you say to a man who lives for eating and drinking, and who is a great glutton, “Be true to yourself”? It is his curse that he is too true to himself—to his gluttonous self. Shall you say to the old curmudgeon, the miser, “Be true to yourself”? He has been, for years and years, clawing and drawing in, and living as though he thought God’s universe was a raking ground, and that he was in the center of it. Self has been his misery and his curse; and shall you exhort him to be true to himself? No, verily. Fidelity to his miserly self has been his damnation. Shall I say to a man who is selfish and sordid, “Be true to yourself”? I shall say to him, “Deny yourself. Take up the cross. Crush that which has been your central self in times gone by.” Shall I say to a man who uses his force in an arbitrary, lordly, unfeeling way, so as to injure and oppress others, “Be true to yourself”? I shall say to him, “It is being true to yourself that has been your own destruction and others’ misery.”

Let men look and see what that self is which they are serving, when they say, “I am going to be true to myself.” One man is true to himself: he is a peacock. Another man is true to himself: he is a monkey. Another man is true to himself: he is a lion, or a tiger, or a bear.

If you go on with this maxim, and use it indiscriminately, and

apply it to the strongest parts of a man's character, there is nothing that you cannot justify, from the top to the bottom of society. How much obstinacy and mischief have been wrought among men by the indiscreet use of this phrase !

I say, in regard to your whole lower self, "Deny, tie up, bind, drill, discipline, educate, harness, restrain that self."

But then, there is a divine self. There is a point in the economy of the human mind in which we are living no longer by our sensuous faculties ; in which we are living no longer by the eye or the ear. Thought takes the place of observation, of sense, of sensation ; and we have affections and ideas, which ripen into clusters of endless variety ; and the imagination begins to irradiate our inward life ; and we begin to feel in directions that the animal knows nothing of ; and moral sentiments spring up in us ; and we enlarge ourselves ; and we use our powers ; and things related to their use—rights, benefits, bounties, magnanimities, generosities—come in, to guide our thought and imagination. Our horizon widens. We take into view the invisible world, however far away it may seem. God comes into our consideration. We believe in the spirits of just men made perfect. Our mind takes in a nobler sphere, a larger range. And although we are still connected with the body, and all the necessities which attach to it by reason of this lower sphere, yet it becomes subject to our higher self.

Now, in regard to this higher self, out of which spring all fidelity, all conceptions of heroism, all purity, all truth, all faith, all love, I say, *Be true to it.*

Look at it a little in detail. No child comes out of his father's house who should not be exhorted, "Be true to yourself, as a man of honor." Although honor varies with the sentiment of different nations, and sometimes traverses itself, yet there is an element in the matter of honor which is of immense value. There is a sense of that which is just and right, and of good report ; and *honor* is the consideration of these things from a higher standpoint than a merely commercial one. It is not a simple feeling that they are right abstractly, nor is it a moral sense alone ; honor has something of imagination in it. It also has in it something of heroism. It is a lower form of conscience, dressed out in heroic elements. A man, a gentleman, without honor, is imperfect. Honor should ripen into religion, if that does not already exist ; and when religion comes into the soul, it should develop honor. I see many persons who are conscientious, but who I do not think are honorable. A man may be conscientious and not honorable. A man may have a narrow, ignorant, misleading conscience, and may mean to do what is right,

and yet may pass among men for a dishonorable man. It is often the case that a man treats his fellow-men unkindly, pinchingly, meanly, under a general sense that it is right to do so—and that is what I call a *misleading conscience*.

On the other hand, there are a great many men who are loose in their ethical opinions, but who have a certain sensibility to right and wrong, though it is in a narrow sphere; though it has respect mainly to this life, and has little regard to the life which is to come; though it relates chiefly to men that are about one, and gives little consideration to those that are remote. Nevertheless, the spirit of honor, even under such circumstances, is one of the things without which society would be bankrupt.

No man, therefore, ought to go into society without having the principle of honor in him. I love to see a man who is sensitive to it. I love to hear a man, where there is occasion for it, say, "Do you doubt my honor, sir?" It is not necessary that one should be irritable and quarrelsome in the matter of honor; but I like to see a man hold fast to this quality. It is not best that he should talk much about it, or boast of it, but he ought to have it, and it should be fashioned on the highest forms of those elements which go to constitute a true Christian gentleman. It should be characterized by truth and fidelity. It should be combined with modesty, disinterestedness, self-sacrifice, and bounty toward others.

Sir Philip Sidney was considered a perfect gentleman; but not, I take it, on such a pattern as the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians prescribes. Oh that I could make a bath of that chapter, and roll men in it till the color struck through and through! What perfect gentlemen I would make of them! Love is there regarded as the peculiar element of Christian manhood, and what a description is given of it!

"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Read the thirteenth of 1st Corinthians, be that, and you will be a perfect Christian gentleman. The highest type of gentleman is a Christian gentleman. A man, to be a perfect gentleman, in the highest sense of that term, must feel the inspiration of the heart of God!

Parents should bring up their children to fear God, we are told. That injunction is a good one, if you mean reverential fear alone; but it is a bad one, if you mean servile fear. There is nothing that we fear more than the frown of one that we love. As a child fears

a kind and loving mother, so we are to fear God. We are to bring our children up to all that is sacred and admirable ; but we are to bring them up to a sense of honor.

Among men this is a thing of education. It is a work for the table and for the nursery. It is a process which we are to carry along with religious instruction. I do not think we educate too much in religion, but I think that we sometimes suppose a narrow idea of religion to be sufficient, without instruction in the sense of honor ; while the fact is that a knowledge of what constitutes true honor is very important.

I say to a young man, when he leaves his father's house and goes out into the world, "Now, be true to yourself—your better self. Do not let it become tarnished. Do not adopt that base and servile maxim, 'When you are among Romans do as Romans do.' You might as well say to a man, 'Among foxes do as foxes do ; among wolves do as wolves do ; among lions do as lions do.' " No ; be a *man* always, everywhere, under all circumstances ; and never forget that the more sensitive your honor, the higher its pitch, and the nobler its aspiration, the better it is for you. And if others are unlike you, do not take to hating them. Let your light so shine that men shall see in your religion the type of higher character. Be true to yourself, when *yourself* means *honor*.

Cultivate conscience, also, which is something more comprehensive than honor, and which is that soil out of which honor grows as naturally as a plant grows out of the ground. Be true to yourself as a man of honor and of conscience, in your judgments, your purposes and your conduct. As against self-conceit, be true to your sense of that which is best and ripest.

Do you tell me that life is so involved that you cannot get along and be an honest man ? I say that you cannot afford to get along then. You must find a way, or make a way, to do right. Do you tell me that business is reduced to so fine a point of competition that men who are to live must be dishonest ? I reply to you as Talleyrand replied to a man who said to him, "Why, you know I must live"—*I do not see that*. There is no special reason why you should live. It may be that in matters of business you are not strong enough. This is a thing which depends upon the type of the man.

Do you say, "I must have money" ? Ah ! that ends it for you. "They that will be rich," says the apostle, "fall into temptation and a snare." That is so. He also says, "The love of money is the root of all evil." That is so, too. It is not *money* that is the root of all evil, but the *love* of it. It is hungering, hankering after

riches; it is making haste to acquire wealth in the best way, of course, if you can: if you cannot, in the next best way, or in some damnable way—it is this that constitutes the evil. But it is not necessary that you should be rich. You can live without riches. You can get along with a little. It is not necessary that you should build a gorgeous palace, and furnish it magnificently. If, however, you make up your mind that you must have certain things; if you regard those things as indispensable to your happiness; if you say, “I am not going to move among common folks;” if you say, “I am going to stand up there, by fair means if I can, if not, by any means by which I can climb,” then to you “money is the root of all evil,” indeed.

Now, let every young man who is called into life be true to himself, as a conscience-bearer. If you cannot maintain your integrity and succeed, less success with a clear conscience will bring you more happiness. And let me tell you, success surely comes with conscience in the long run, other things being equal. Capacity and fidelity are commercially profitable qualities. They may demand a long time to achieve profit, but at length they are profitable.

Be true to yourself, also, as a conscience-bearer, against ridicule. This I address more especially to the young, though I think elderly people are as sensitive to ridicule, in their way, as people that are young. Many a man, from fear of having the finger of ridicule pointed at him, goes aside from what he understands to be the truest and best things. Do not comply with usages, because you are afraid to be singular. Singularity is the right of every honest man; and if to speak what you think makes you singular, blessed be God for your singularity. Always be true to your convictions on any subject, no matter how much those convictions may differ from the convictions of others. If you think it is wrong to play cards, do not play cards. If you think it is perfectly right to play cards, do not be afraid to play cards. If you believe it to be a sin to dance, do not let any man persuade you to dance. If you believe there is no possible harm in dancing, do not be afraid to dance. Act according to your highest judgment. “Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.” Do not comply with others’ opinions unless they commend themselves to your judgment. Do that which you think is right, whatever others may say or think. Refuse to do that which you believe to be wrong, let the consequences be what they may. Follow your convictions in all your actions. It is not half so dangerous doing this, that, or the other thing which you think is right, though you stand alone in your opinion, as compliance or

non-compliance with the views of society contrary to your own moral sentiments. Sacrificing yourself is the mischief and peril.

Be true to yourself against sympathetic bias through your best affections. We hear such excuses as these from persons who have done what they knew was wrong: "I could not say 'No,' and disoblige one who has been so kind to me;" "I could not say 'No' to one that I loved;" "after having received such favors, I could not bear to put the company to blush and shame, as if I were their monitor and superior." I do not know that the Lord ever gave you any encouragement to suppose you could follow him without some cross-bearing. I do not believe any one ever became a full man without some cross-bearing. No man ever becomes a good thinker or actor in any department without cross-bearing. Be true to your conscience, whatever it may require of you.

Be true to your conscience against all those society compliances which may be easy and pleasant, but which in the end lower the tone of your manhood and self-respect, and take away from your moral discrimination its clarity, and its power over your life. Do right, however much it may cost you. Let your conduct always agree with your own convictions of right.

Be true to yourself, likewise, as a *man*—as a *Christian* man—as a man according to the pattern of Christ Jesus. No matter where that pattern came from; no matter from what source your knowledge of it was derived, follow it. Let it be your perpetual guide. Let it direct you in your outlooking and forelooking. We are in the image of God, and are the children of God, who have been touched by the Holy Ghost. Our life lies through matter, above matter, and beyond matter; in time, through time, and beyond time. We are children of immortality. Around us angels wait. The divine ministrations of providence work both outwardly and inwardly for us. God rules in our behalf. Heaven stands beckoning to us with sweet and bounteous invitation. Be true to that manhood which has immortality beyond it. Be true to that manhood which has for its father, God; for its friend, Christ; for its light, the Holy Ghost.

I beseech of you, in attempting to be true to yourself, beware of conceit; beware of narrow-mindedness; beware of indecent haste; beware of that laziness which refuses to read or think; beware of that intellectual presumption which leads you to suppose you can undo the thinkings of generations of mankind, or safely depart without consideration from the results which have been arrived at by the experiments of ages. It is hard to inaugurate a new truth, or to wean the world of those things which it has learned through

floods of tears in centuries of experience. So, be true to yourself, not in any vandal spirit, but with humility and meekness ; with teachableness ; with yearnings for a higher and better life.

I exhort you to be true to yourself. Look up and behold the exemplar, Jesus Christ. Pattern upon him, and thus aim at a better self than you can have here. Measure your life upon his life. Measure your soul upon his soul. Measure your disposition upon his disposition. Live so as, according to the strength of your nature in comparison with his, to reproduce the life of Christ in you. Live as Christ lived. Live for Christ. Then divine manhood will almost be yours on earth, and will ripen into divinity in the life that is to come.

To the bountiful and blessed providence that issues from the Heart of Love, I commit you. Young men and maidens, those in mid-life, and those who are approaching old age, look, I beseech you, one and all, away from your lower selves, up to your spiritual and divine selves. Nay, look away from yourselves entirely, to God. Fear him, and keep his commandments. That is all.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WE rejoice, our Father, that we are not left to our own wisdom or knowledge. The spark would go out, and the flame would cease, but for the ministration of thy Spirit. Thou that sustainest the universe, and dost wield the orbs thereof; thou that dost turn this earth as a little thing, and dost clothe it through the seasons with thy bounty; thou that dost minister, each moment, to every living thing, and that art the source of life, the source of thought, the source of all that is noble and good in man,—we rejoice in thy paternal care and kindness, which is assured to us, and which has been made manifest in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and in his witness to us of the Holy Ghost, and, by the whole experience of our life, tested and made sure. We rejoice in the long line of those who have trusted thee, and not come to shame. We look back and see how many there have been of whom the world was not worthy, suffering in every form; cast out and rejected, persecuted, seemingly forsaken and cast to the ground, yet remembered by thee, upheld and made victorious, yea, crowned with death, which is better victory than life, and brought home to the heavenly land, to be with thee, and to rejoice with thee. There mingle the blessed of every age. There the things which earth was too cold to grow, thrive in a better clime. Buds that know not how to blossom here, are in full bloom there. That which was green and unlovely with us is ripe and beautiful with thee. That which was fragile and poor in this world, is, on that shore where no storm beats, growing strong and enduring as God. We rejoice in thinking that we are all, though with silent steps, and along the invisible way, quite unknown to ourselves, moving toward the blessed land. Though winter may betide us here, summer is waiting for us there. Though there may be mischances here, there are none there. Though blows and trouble may accompany our earthly experience, we rejoice in sufferings and tribulations, knowing that they work patience, and gentleness, and aspiration, and trust in God, and helpfulness, and courage. We rejoice that none can pluck us out of thine hand. Thou Lover! thou “that hast known our infirmities and our sins; thou that hast watched over us from the cradle and from our father’s house,—thou art still our Lover and our Friend; in thee we are strong, and by thy grace omnipotent.

We rejoice in thee. We put all our trust and hope in thee. What time come fierce temptations; what time come doubts and fears; what time the very ground of trust and confidence seems crumbling and passing from under our feet; yea, when Satan vehemently tempts us, and says, Where is now thy God?—even then, through temptations infernal, through doubts and fears and skepticisms, we rise up and say, Thou art our God, and our souls’ peculiar shelter; we rest in thee; and thou shalt accomplish thine own purposes; thou shalt fulfill thine own blessed will. And they who trust thee shall be mightier than princes. Thou shalt cause them to ride upon the high places of the earth.

We beseech of thee that the poor and needy may look unto thee; that those who are discouraged and distressed may feel that they have a God; that those who seem open to the incursion of every misfortune may feel that God is near them, to shield them. May those who run easily to mischief feel that God is their Helper, and that he will save them.

We pray that poverty may be blessed to the poor, and that they may learn to work out of it a grace of God which shall make them fit to be disciples of Christ in the heavenly land.

We beseech of thee that those who are in the midst of worldly trials and perplexities, may be able to carry themselves so that men shall see that God is with them.

We beseech of thee, O Lord our God, that thou wilt open the heart of every one who is in prosperity. Grant that those who are blessed with abundance may not grow selfish. Grant that self-indulgence may not take possession of them. May they not forget the dependence of men upon each other. May pitifulness and charity fill the hearts of all those whom thou art filling with worldly good.

We pray that thou wilt teach our young men to grow up in honor; in truth; in fidelity; in large-mindedness; in the power of doing good; in royal love of other men. And we pray that patriotism may be redeemed from its degrading captivities. Make heroes among men again. May our maidens grow up in all purity and sweetness of love and fidelity. We pray that faithful instruction may be as the gate of heaven to them. May the Lord dwell in the midst of them.

Grant, we pray thee, that the foundation of things may be established in all this land. And yet, why do we pray for it as if it were the only land which thou dost think of. Remember other nations besides our own. Pity all the nations of the earth. Oh, bring in those years of predication which have been so slowly coming on. How long will thy purposes need to linger? How long before the blessings which thou hast in store for mankind shall ripen?

O Lord our God, lay thine hand upon the tree of life, and shake down the leaves from it for the healing of the nations, that they may learn to cast away their ignorance, their selfishness, their degradation, their false religions; that they may learn to cast away everything that is vile and unmanly; that there may be no more oppressions; that there may be no more wars; that there may be nothing which shall defile in all the world.

And bring men together, at last. In these later ages, teach this quarrelling, selfish, hating, fighting race to love, so that ere long, rising in sweet concord, prayers of love and songs of love and joy, shall fill the air, and Heaven hear the music, and the new heaven and the new earth in which dwell righteousness, come. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be the praise. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we pray for thy blessing to rest upon the word of truth. Grant that it may be indeed a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path. May we betake ourselves to thy word. It is a guide. How many in this ship have gone safely over the stormy sea! How many have found thy rod and thy staff to be a strength and a comfort! How many have found in communion with thee, and in the interpretation of thy precious truths, life from the dead! O Lord, we pray that we may have the knowledge of God, personal relationship to him, and the sanctifying influences of the divine Spirit. May we be restrained from looking to ourselves and leaning upon ourselves; and, above all, from doing it conceitedly, and with overweening confidence. May we seek to remember, not ourselves alone, but Jesus Christ, the hope of glory. And so living, may we find ourselves under the influence of the life to come, until we shall be permitted to inherit it, and dwell with thee.

And to thy name shall be the praise, forever and ever. *Amen.*

THE ALTARS OF CHILDHOOD REBUILT.

I propose to draw some instruction from a portion of the history contained in the 18th chapter of the 1st Book of Kings.

The 1st and 2d Books of Samuel, the 1st and 2d Books of Kings, and the 1st and 2d Books of Chronicles, are national histories. They belong to a system of things which has passed away.

An extract from the records of the House of Representatives, or of the Senate of the United States, would scarcely be regarded as sacred literature in our time; but among the Hebrews in early days there was no distinction between civil and religious life. To worship God and to serve the country were acts inseparable; and heresy, a departure from God, was a violation of the Constitution of the nation.

The records of the proceedings of kings, of courts, of magistrates, were also sacred records; because they were bound up and indissolubly united together. These books, therefore, that contain the history of the times of the judges of a crude and rude commonwealth, and of its transition into a monarchy; these books that contain the history of the rise and progress of the oriental monarchy of Solomon, glittering, hollow, corrupt,—these books are sacred to the Jews, because they are not, as our political records are, simply the unfolding of their exterior life, but the unfolding of their whole life.

In consequence of the great oppressions of taxation, and of the taking for the army of their sons, the kingdom, at the death of Solomon, revolted. Ten tribes went away, leaving only those in southern Judea to worship the true God; for very soon the fragments that went asunder from Judea were overtaken by idolatry.

After several reigns, we come to that of Ahab, who was one of the ablest and worst of sovereigns, and who had for his prime minister one of the ablest and worst of women that there is any record of in Scripture. He had married Jezebel out of a foreign country. She was the daughter of the King of Zidon, a Phœnician king.

She brought with her the worship of the Phœnicians—namely, the worship of Baal, of Ashtoreth, or of Astarte, as it is elsewhere called. What the precise worship of Baal was, we do not know, except that it was idolatrous and gorgeous. What the worship of Ashtoreth or Astarte was, they know who make themselves familiar with the worship of Venus.

In olden times, Ahab had become king of the ten tribes of Israel, led them away from the true God, and introduced a seductive, idolatrous worship, which filled up all the senses of the people with the gorgeousness of temples and altars multitudinous.

There was one altar of peculiar sacredness to the Hebrew mind, which had been erected to Jehovah in past generations. It had round about it a sanctity which has belonged to scarcely any other place except Jerusalem; and that was the altar which stood on the eastern range of hills or mountains named Mount Carmel, which has an eastern slope of some six hundred feet, and a western slope of some sixteen hundred feet of elevation. It is a wooded hill, or succession of hills, blossoming, it is said, with almost every single plant known in the Orient. It is full of caves. Thousands are counted within it. It is a limestone range, filled with ravines and living springs.

On the eastern side, the outlook must have been grand; for on the left, or toward the northeast, was the great plain of Esdraelon—the largest and richest plain in Palestine, and the gateway through which the East and the West communicated. The Phœnician commerce, passing over this great plain, and crossing the Jordan a little below the Sea of Galilee, was going to the Eastern nations beyond the plain, now a wilderness in the possession of a few wandering tribes of Bedouins, but then waving with harvests from end to end. On the west, or southwest, was the plain of Sharon, which was separated from Esdraelon by this very range of mountains.

On this range stood the altar of Jehovah which Ahab had broken down and destroyed—the most sacred, probably, of all the altars that remained—a memorial of antiquity—the witness of many sacred temples, and of many national transactions of the last degree of importance; and in breaking it down Ahab had violated feelings of association and of patriotism, as well as that reverence which is due to religious instruments and places. It had been defiled and destroyed; and all through the land swarmed the minions of Baal. More than four hundred and fifty there were, of the priests of Baal; and of Astarte or Ashteroth there were four hundred “prophets of the groves,” as they were called. There were

some eight hundred and fifty of these priests in the upper part of Palestine, carrying on the gorgeous, dissolute worship of these foreign deities. And there was no organized opposition to them. There were a few priests remaining who attempted to be faithful; but Jezebel sent forth, and, with cruel hand, slew them right and left, wherever they could be found. A few had been hidden and saved—not many. But one or two dared to face the king and the queen, and acknowledge Jehovah. The name *Jehovah* was a name full of danger to those who had any connection with it personally, or through their national history.

And so Ahab, with Jezebel by his side, rode down the national customs and the national religion, and violated all the associations that should have been most sacred to the people; and there was no synagogue, there was no organized resistance of any kind; everything was dark and desolate and dissolute; and the kingdom seemed ready to perish.

Over the other side of the Jordan, where the land is full of hills and mountains, where it is rough and hard, but where there are numerous valleys teeming with population, is the country of Gilead; and there Elijah, the Tishbite, was born. More and more, the population originally constituting that part of the Jewish nation which took possession of the territory east of the Jordan had fallen into wandering and nomadic habits. More and more, they assumed the manners of wandering and nomadic tribes. Out from among these people came Elijah, who was by far the most dramatic character of the Jewish history; not the most influential man, but certainly the most impressive and startling. Doubtless, judging from some intimations that are given, he was tall, thin, of that peculiar hardy texture which indicates flesh, muscle and bone. Doubtless he had long black hair, and a dark eye, sunken beneath projecting brows.

This is not altogether fancy, but it is not history; it is only gathered, as it were, from probabilities and analogies: but doubtless this wild and nomadic creature, dressed in the rude habiliments of his people, wearing a skin cloak and a leather girdle about him, and walking with a long staff, such as mountaineers learn to use, was the figure that appeared upon the scene during the height of the prosperity of Ahab.

The early part of his history I do not propose to delineate, though it is eminently striking. Some few of the points of his later history I shall open to you in a moment.

There had been a great drought and famine; and Elijah was informed by the Lord that it was about to cease. Obadiah, who had

been a faithful servant of God, and who was the governor of Ahab's house, was chosen by Elijah to bear a message to Ahab. Obadiah protested that it would be as much as his life was worth; and he gave as a reason the fact of his service to his people. Elijah reassured him, and told him that he himself would certainly appear before Ahab that day.

"So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah."

It was not the first time that the stronger man wore no crown. There has been a time when Mazzini was stronger than Pope and King. There have been times when single men had more power than the whole government. And this man Ahab, crowned, throned, and supreme, when Elijah sent for him, went to meet him.

"It came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

Impudent fellow! The man whose bloody hand had carried misrule and corruption and death to the institutions of his country—had he the face to say to this anointed prophet of God, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Bad men, in power, never count their own abuses, but always those things which check them in their career, and attempt to bring reformation.

"He answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

Brave man! to stand face to face with the king and speak such words as those.

"Now, therefore, send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table."

This was very summary. This was sovereignty indeed. Elijah had nothing but his staff and himself; but a man's own self is sometimes more than armies. Here was the king, confronting this wild prophet from the wilderness. He knew him; he had heard of his deeds; he knew what power he had upon the imagination of the people, and upon their hearts; and he obeyed him, and sent for the prophets.

"So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel."

The memorials of the old ruined altar were still there. It was around about that point—namely, the eastern termination of Carmel—that the tremendous scene about to be recounted took place.

It would be impossible for us now to send and bring all New England to any given place in the Eastern States, or to bring all

the inhabitants of the Middle States to any given point in those States ; but we are to recollect how simple life was then, and how different the whole social economy from what it is now. We are to recollect that men were moveable in masses, and could sustain themselves. We are to recollect that not one ten thousandth part of the retinue or expense which is occasioned by the complex civilization of modern times was necessary then. It was an easy thing for a region round about to pour in its thousands and hundreds of thousands of people ; for a little parched corn was all the food they needed, and they slept where the night found them.

“Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people [standing around, and looking at each other, and wondering what this boldness meant] answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord.”

The pathos of this we cannot understand. It must have touched a thousand thousand hearts with the tenderest feelings. They remembered the days of their fathers, and the service of the Lord, and the prophets that had been slain ; and when this bold man stood alone, with nothing but his staff, without armies, without attendants, and appealed to them, saying, “I am the only one that is left to represent your fathers’ God,” he touched a fountain in the bosom of this great people.

“I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord ; but Baal’s prophets are four hundred and fifty men.”

Now he proposes that they shall have a test ; and whatever men may think of miracles and marvels, no Grecian drama ever imagined so sublime a test-scene as that which follows.

“Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock of themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.”

At this, there was a rustle throughout the great crowd, and an enthusiastic outburst.

“And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.”

So now he had gained one point. He had brought the king face to face with him. Through the royal mandate he had assembled the masses of that great people. More than that, he had gathered together the eight hundred and fifty representative men of the new worship. He was the only living priest and prophet of Jehovah; and there was the crowd of eight hundred and fifty priests of Baal and of the groves, or of Venus. He had propounded a test ; and they had accepted it. Whether they did it willingly or not, we do not know; but the enthusiastic outcry of the people settled the matter.

"And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal [now more and more speaking as their master], Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under."

They went to their work with a good deal of alacrity.

"They took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made."

That is, they went into those excitements, those vehement enthusiasms, that half maniac state, with which the priests used to kindle their zeal.

"It came to pass at noon, that Elijah [who was all alone on that mountain edge] mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing [he is in the chase], or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them."

What was this mockery? Was it the ignoble triumph of a man conscious of his advantage over his adversaries? It was only a dexterous exposition to this great people of Israel of the sham that they were worshipping. It was only a brief and pictorial way of saying to them, "Here are the gods that have been imposed upon you, and that cannot be made to hear." He expounded the nature of their gods, as they must have been held by them.

"It came to pass, when mid-day was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

Now, as the evening was approaching, and the cool shadow of Carmel threw itself down over the crowd which had assembled, the prophet began to take himself unto his own proper and prophetic activity.

"Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me."

His heart yearned for them. And all the people crowded up.

"All the people came near unto him."

One of the most affecting of all things then happened. They saw him turn himself about and go up to the memorials of that altar which had been broken down and desecrated; and without help he lifted stone upon stone back into its place. He brought the scattered parts rudely together again, and rebuilt the altar of their God in the sight of all the people—the old altar, where their fathers had worshiped, and the generations before them—the altar that spoke to them of everything that was sacred in their history. Their chants, their psalms, their possessions, their journeyings in the wilderness, their captivity in Egypt—all these things were grouped in their religious services; and this altar, though

built of stones that were unhewn (for it was not permitted to lift a tool upon material, to make an altar), brought to their minds most sacred associations.

"And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And they did it. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water."

There could be no concealed fire there—that was settled. There could be no trick, no illusion, no jugglery. They had had their time. They had had their altar, their offering, their incantations, and their ill success. He had gathered the old stones back to their place. A thousand hands filled the altar—for he had commanded the services of the people. He had imposed upon them the task of deluging the altar, and that which was upon it, with water, so that there should be no suspicion of any trick or any human power connected with the transaction.

"And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice [see how it touches all the points of memory in the people] that Elijah, the prophet, came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."

There stood before him Ahab, the king, not knowing which way to look, nor what to do; and there stood the exhausted and vexed and disappointed army of priests, who wondered what would happen next; and there was the great hushed mass of the nation that were waiting, expectant.

"Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."

It was but a moment. It was like a vision of lightning.

"And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Is it strange that such an exhibition should produce such an effect? How skilfully every step had been taken! Though Elijah was assured in his own soul that he was about to have the interposition of God in his behalf, yet how wisely did he make his preparation! Every single step was a step toward this final result—the turning back of the hearts of the people to the memory of their own worship, to allegiance to their own Jehovah, and to the re-

establishment of the altars and of the services of the true Son of God. But now comes the scene that is even more astonishing.

"And Elijah said unto them, take the Prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape."

They were wrought up, now, to such a state of enthusiasm, and such was his ascendancy over the people, that they obeyed him instantly.

"And they took them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there."

Eight hundred and fifty there were of them, and he slew them mainly with his own hand. It is doubtful whether he was helped at all. A horrible deed! A horrible necessity! Ahab stood by and saw it all; but Jezebel was not there—she was at home. The next order of the prophet was almost a mockery.

"And Elijah said unto Ahab, get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel."

I will not go further in opening the scene. The rain came, gathering a little cloud upon the east, which Elijah's servant saw; and the blackness of the evening storm filled the whole heaven; and Elijah commanded the king to make haste and escape to the city, lest the storm should overtake him; and he himself ran with the chariot. Nimble as a deer, long-breathed as a hound, he kept pace with the king's horsemen, in that fiery ride; but stopped at the gates of Jesreel, too shrewd to go in. He could manage Ahab, but he was not a match for Jezebel.

Was it right for him to destroy these prophets? It is very certain that no man could do it in our day, on any ground whatever of rectitude; but our day could not produce such necessity. There could be no such exigency now as there was then. Such a man as Elijah could not be produced in our time. Men belong to their times. They are hewn out of the living strata, and are part and parcel of the age in which they live. Elijah belonged to his time, was fitted to it, and fashioned by it, and made to meet its grand necessities. What had they with which to reform a nation? There was not a school-house in all Palestine. There was not a printed book there. There was not a single place of instruction for the people. They were helpless before their despot. There was no preaching among them. There was no means of turning them back, except by producing an impression upon them which should affect their senses—the eye, the ear, and the heart. And it was a tremendous drama that was enacted upon this mountain-stage, where the abashed king stood, humbled before the prophet;

where the prophet, exalted into the intensity of a commanding manhood, was superior to the whole gathered host ; and where the eight hundred and fifty heathen prophets were as nothing before him. In this hour, he stood for all those instrumentalities by which, in modern times, we remove evil, and introduce good. In that day, there were none of these things, and what was done had to be done summarily. It was a question of life and death. Shall this people be seduced into idolatry through their lusts and appetites ? Shall they abandon not only Jehovah, but the worship of Jehovah ? Shall they be treacherous to their own constitution ? Shall the life of the nation be sacrificed ? Shall all hope of life be extinguished by the presence of a foreign worship, a foreign priesthood, not representing the old Jewish blood or the old Jewish ideas, but importing from a corrupt nation foul customs and obscene rites, and making the worship of God worse than a mockery ? And shall the prophet stand there, with the opportunity of destroying the whole nest of worms that were now swept into one bunch before him, and not improve it ? He struck ; and so would I have done if I had been he, and had stood there then ; and so would you—or if you had not, you would have been a dastard recreant. It was the question of breaking, or not breaking, the yoke of an ignoble captivity. There was a chance to strike tyranny to the heart ; and he struck.

Were the lives of those eight hundred and fifty men of great value, compared with the lives of millions of men who were to be emancipated by their destruction ? It was a terrible case. The whole people were being destroyed by Ahab. And if a heart like that of the prophet beat with patriotism ; if the intensity of his love for his own country was heightened by every association with the sanctity of his religion, it made it all the more imperative that strenuous means should be employed in bringing back the people to their own laws and customs, and to the true worship of Jehovah.

Now, consider how brief this work was. These people were called together in a most tremendous emergency. And suppose Elijah had sent them back to their homes, saying, “ Go and think of this ; go and talk it over, and come back again when the next week or the next month shall come round, and then let us take counsel together as to what shall be done to restore the true worship of the God of Israel ” ? The effect would all have been lost. It was when the enthusiasm was high, and the zeal was hot, that he must strike—then or never !

There are those who are opposed to excitement. There are those who are prejudiced against acting except after cool and mature

judgment. Unquestionably, all topics that lie in the range of intellectual activity are better judged of without the efflux of feeling than with it. If it is a question of arithmetic, of mathematics, of history, of physical properties, men do not want the disturbing influences of emotion to aid them in deciding it. But shall the poet be told to calm down his rapture before he writes, in order to write with judgment? Shall the prophet, in moments of inspiration, be called back to the cold regions of logic? When men are to be aroused on topics that involve moral and social truths, shall they be told to be cool? Is excitement other than normal when the truths to which men's attention is called are subject to the feelings?

The prophet aroused the hearts and consciences of the people on purpose. And was that the time for them to deliberate? Why should they have had an opportunity to think? They needed not to think. They were simply asked to seize the moment when all opposition was rolled away, to do the things which they had believed in from their childhood. They were merely asked to take those steps which should fortify them against returning idolatry, to commit themselves against a usurping government, to set their faces against the worship of foreign idols; and it was philosophical to do it.

Now, is it right, when men are gathered together in God's temples, to excite them on the subject of religious life? Some say, "Appeal to our judgment; appeal to our reason." What other appeal has been made since men were born? What source of knowledge does not appeal to their reflection? How are their thoughts trained and disciplined in all that pertains to manliness! They have been instructed over, and over, and over again. And when they have been, if I may so say, smothered under the burden of knowledge, is it not right that there should be the torch of inspiration to lift them to a higher life, and produce in them those joys which stand, or ought to stand, connected with the proper sequence of the instruction which they have received? And as the prophet did wisely avail himself of the moment of enthusiasm to bring his people back to their true allegiance, and to ratify it, so it is right for the preachers and teachers in our day to develop intense excitement, and in the moment of that excitement, to call on them, not to choose between doubtful things or unknown quantities, but to choose that way which their thoughts have been familiar with ever since they were children in the cradle; that way which their fathers and mothers taught them with tears; that way about which they have read in the Bible from their childhood up; that way which

they have had pointed out to them time and again in the village church. Do things which have constantly been before the mind, from the time when a man was five, or ten, or fifteen years old, need to be remanded to the court of investigation before he can decide them?

There are in my presence, to-night, hundreds of men who have departed from the worship of the God of their fathers. Some of them have gone after Astarte; some of them have gone after Baal; they have been solicited, and have given way, on the right and on the left, and the laws of God have been broken down in their midst. There are men here to-night who have not been inside of a sanctuary of Jehovah before for years and years. Some chance, they say, some providence, I say, has brought them hither on this occasion. There are those here who have not thought on religious themes for a long, long time, having been so completely absorbed by pursuits of business or pleasure; but to-night they have heard the songs of Zion, their thoughts have been lifted up, and wafted away backward, and they are thinking of the hamlets and the green hills of their childhood, of the father and mother that prayed for them, and of the brothers and sisters that loved them, and sought to lead them in the paths of righteousness. They are thinking of the companions of their youth, and of the hopes of their childhood. Such memories hover over men as the very ministers of God. And to-night, through the portals of their feelings, their thoughts have been broken up; and I have a right at this moment of their excitement, to say to them, "Return to the God of your fathers. The Lord Jehovah, he is God—your God."

As the Jew was touched when God was called the "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel," so may you well be touched when I remind you of the God of your father, and the God of your mother, and the God that you have loved and departed from. It ought to make life sacred in the retrospect to you.

I bring this God before you to-night, and say to every man who has gone away from him, and broken down his altar, and cast aside all the memorials of the true faith—I bring this God before you, to-night, in this sacred place, and at this solemn hour, and say, "Choose ye whom ye will serve. If God, and heaven, and eternity be true, then turn your face to God, and give your heart to him, and begin to serve him without hesitation; but if those gods that represent the great thundering phantasmagoria of solicitation and lust be true, then turn your face to them, and give your heart to them, and begin to serve them without hesitation.

I build again, to-night, the old altar for you; I call down the

sacred fire of inspiration upon your hearts ; and I implore every one of you not to delay to choose. Do not wait till the congregation breaks up, nor till the shadows of evening darken into night. Now, and here, I say, slay the prophets that have led you wrong. Destroy those pleasures, and that business, and those seductions which have enticed you away from your early faith in God. Kill them here, and stand up, and say, "The Lord Jehovah is my God, and henceforth I will serve him."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

WHAT are we, what are our offerings, that we should bring them before the Lord of heaven and earth? Wert thou not our Father, wert thou only the Judge and the King, we should not dare to come into thy presence; but thou hast made us. We were not made subject to vanity willingly, but by the will of Him that created us. Thou hast blessed us on earth, and surrounded us by all the things that we are working upon. We are known by thee in all our weaknesses, and necessities, and trials, and temptations. Before the generations came forth, while yet they were afar off, thou didst discern their wants and needs, and didst have compassion towards them.

O Lord, we rejoice that we may come to thee by the way of love and trust, if we cannot come by the way of merit. By faith we draw near to thee—that faith which works by love. We rejoice in thy power,—so much of it as we can perceive,—and in those supreme motives which direct even divine power; for thou art seeking everywhere to fulfill thy beneficence. Yea, and all suffering, all sorrow, all sighing, all tears, all groans, which shall go to swell the anthem of trouble in the universe shall yet be overcome by thee. For thou hast not made darkness to forever shut out the light. Thou hast not made the spirit of holiness that it should be trodden under foot. By and by thou wilt set thy Son on the hill of Zion, and proclaim him Sovereign over all creation. All knees shall bow, and every tongue shall confess, to the glory of God.

We rejoice in all the intimations which thou hast given us of the future. When we look back to see what thou hast done since the times of the fathers, and what is the state in which we dwell, of privilege, and knowledge, and impulse in things right, we marvel at the greatness of the work which hath been accomplished, and we chide our impatience and doubt. We wonder at thy delay, O Lord our God; but grant that we may draw from all the events of the past, arguments of hope in the future. Roll on thy victorious chariot still toward light and knowledge. Still raise up the nations to morality by the power of holiness.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant that all those who sit in darkness may see the light coming toward them, the star of the morning rising, the twilight dawning, the day breaking.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to all those who are laboring in thy providence, in every direction,—to those who search for the secrets of God hidden in outward nature, to those who are examining into the ways of men and the processes of human life for the divine methods, and to those who are studying the records of the past, and teaching from them,—we beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to all such thy wisdom and guidance. We beseech of thee that thou wilt bring them into unity and sympathy. And as they all serve God in fulfilling their duty toward men, so may they be workers together with God, not only in the development of truth, but in its application.

We pray for the amelioration of manners; for purity of conduct; for more noble ideals of manhood; and for a more faithful discharge of public duties.

We pray that thou wilt look upon the household, and purify it; upon all the ways of business, and purge them; upon the ways of public procedure, and deliver them from greediness, and mad ambition, and every form of corruption.

We pray that thou wilt grant that this great commonwealth, lying abroad upon the continent, may be strong, not in its riches, not in its external power, but in the strength of God. And we pray that humanity may be more and more perfectly understood in all its applications and relations.

Lift the light of thy countenance, we pray thee, upon this great people, and make them fit instruments to guide other nations to true liberty and real virtue, by the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, and by the love of God which is the end thereof.

And we pray that thou wilt grant that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon those who are preaching thy word everywhere, to-day, at home and abroad. Grant that all who, in far distant lands, and in the islands of the sea, are making known the unsearchable riches of Christ, may feel thy presence; and may thy breath be breathed upon them as the breath of life. We pray that the time may come when there shall be no more need of threatenings and judgments. Grant that the day of reason, and faith, and love, and universal helpfulness may dawn, that the new heaven and the new earth may appear, and that God may rejoice with everlasting joy over his creatures.

And to thy name, Father, Son and Spirit, shall be the praise. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

OUR Father, we beseech thee that thou wilt bless the word of instruction. May the histories of the past throw their light down upon the present. May we rejoice to see how far we have traveled from the early rudeness of men; how far knowledge has brought us forward. May we also remember that, as our privileges are greater, so are our responsibilities; and that if we fall from the height which we have reached, our fall will be the greater, and we shall be dashed to pieces. Grant that there may be some here to-night who shall turn themselves away from evil, away from all forms of seduction, away from the world as a contaminator, and go back again to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls—to the Lord God who loves, to Jesus Christ who saves, and to the Holy Spirit who enlightens and sanctifies. Bring in, we beseech of thee, the children of prayer. Bring back the wanderers, who have forsaken their first love. Bring out, we beseech thee, from the households, those who have forgotten to pray. Oh, grant that there may be many hearts in which there shall be the light of faith again. May there be many families in which the altars shall be built up once more. May there be many who shall cease from world-idolatry, and world-worship, and self-seeking, and seek purity, and truth, and honor, and virtue, and faith, and love—the very love of Jesus Christ. We ask these things in his name. And to the Father and the Spirit shall be the praise, evermore. *Amen.*

PAUL AND SILAS IN PRISON.

I propose to read, and accompany with some remarks, that passage which begins with the 16th verse of the 16th chapter of Acts :

“And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days.”

It was the custom of the apostle, in every city where he was (and there was almost no city in the civilized world in which there were not large numbers of his own countrymen), to resort, on Sabbath days and others, at the appointed times, to the synagogues, for prayer. He maintained the usages of his people. All the early Christians did. There was no difference between the disciples of Christ and the ordinary Jewish people, except that the disciples superadded to the regular worship of their nation the service and the faith which referred to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor were there churches in Judea until after the destruction of the temple and the altar worship.

Paul, being in a foreign or Grecian city, was beset, on his way to prayer from day to day, by a soothsaying woman. Precisely what we are to understand here by *soothsayer* does not appear. It was the opinion of the early fathers or commentators that it included ventriloquism ; but that she was one of those who had also the spirit of divination, the art of seeing what ordinarily people could not see, or of telling what ordinarily people could not find out by the use of their senses ; that she was one of those who had that apparently abnormal power which we see still developed in our time—second sight, clairvoyance, magnetism, whatever may be the meaning of those terms—that she was one who had that strange, indefinable, and as yet unascertained power or faculty, there can be no reasonable doubt.

There are those who undertake to say that there is nothing but

fancy in these things—that they have no foundation in fact. That all that is claimed is to be conceded, I do not believe for a moment ; and that the causes alleged are the real causes of the phenomena, I do not pretend to say ; but, that when you shall have made ever so much exception for deceit, for collusion, and for illusion, there is a large residuum of fact that is genuine, though not as yet explainable, I do not doubt. That it has existed from age to age, and that, in some ages, for some reasons, though not necessarily by any increase of inspiration, it has had special development, I think there can be no doubt. And that this case was one of that class, there can be as little doubt.

This woman was a slave. Her “masters,” as it is translated here—her owners—went with her. She, possessing either the art of amusing the crowd by her ventriloquial gift, or else some clairvoyant power—something, at any rate, which aroused curiosity,—was their stock in trade ; and they went with her, probably, from city to city, and made much gain by her.

When she saw Paul, moved by some spirit, I know not what, by some influence, I know not what, she cried out, in regard to him and those who were with him :

“These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days.”

This was a testimony, and it was a true testimony ; and by that token she showed that it was not altogether an illusion and a lie under which she labored ; and that when she interpreted the nature and spirit of these men she hit it right, while she would not have been likely to hit it right, if it had been pure illusion.

“But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.”

The question at once arises, Since this woman had discerned and borne testimony to the divinity that was in the servants of the Most High, and since she was disposed to vindicate their character and their mission, why the apostle should have been grieved—why he should not have addressed the crowd, and said, “She bears a true testimony”?

I answer : Paul was one who loved sound, healthy human nature. He could not, from any considerations of curiosity or of self-interest, witness with complacency any distortion, any abnormal or unwholesome condition, whether it benefited him or not. There was nothing nobler in his sight than a right-minded man or woman ; and discerning here a condition which he did not regard as normal, he could not but disapprove it. The Jews were educated to abhor all this class of gifts. They denounced them,

and made it a crime to meddle with such things; and Paul, with the instinct not only of his education, but of the love of manliness which he had all his life long showed in himself, and which he also showed by his sympathy, took sides with the woman as she should be, against the woman as she was; and, like a noble and lofty spirit, he scorned any transient or momentary compliment of the spirit within her, and said, "Come out of her"—evidently regarding it as an intrusive spirit of evil; and so she was healed.

Now, when her owners saw that she was healed; when they saw this poor creature whose mind had been distorted restored to health; when they saw the spirit of evil cast out of her, with what eyes did they look upon her? It is not to be supposed that these men really disliked to see a virtuous, upright, intelligent person. No doubt, if they had gone into a great assembly where there was, on the platform, a person showing traits of royal manhood, they would have admired him; and when the crowd broke out in plaudits, doubtless they would have been as enthusiastic as any of the rest. In all probability, they liked virtue, and they liked manliness. Very likely they were devotees in their own religion. I presume they were persons who, in their way, contemplated with approval obedience to the laws, and reverence for God. It may be presumed that there were times when these men felt a strong admiration for saintship. It could not be said, in a general way, that they did not like healthy manhood and healthy womanhood. Abstractly they did. They did concretely. They did, when their interests were not involved. But this woman was their stock in trade, and they had never been accustomed to look upon her except in her money-producing aspects. They had lost sight of all that belonged to her but her commercial value. And when the apostle destroyed that, he struck the chord of avarice in them, and not that of admiration for the higher qualities of womanhood. So they were exceedingly angry. They had no objection to men's going from a lower state to a higher, or to Christ's practicing his power on other people's slaves and instruments; but they were making money, and here were good bargains knocked in the head. Here was a daily and weekly revenue scattered by the breath of the apostle's voice; and they looked at the matter purely from a commercial point of view.

Now, there are hundreds of men destroying their fellow-men, in this city and the great city near us. They turn the lusts and appetites of their fellow-men to their own account; and if those lusts and appetites were quenched, they would have nothing to do. They are making money out of the infirmities, the weaknesses, or the wickednesses of their fellow-men.

But it is not to be supposed that these men are monsters in the sense of hating mankind. Now and then there may be such ; but you will find among bad men many good-natured fellows. You will hear them say, in respect to some comrade, " Luke has been to a Methodist meeting lately, and he is doing better ; and I am glad of it." You will hear them say of some other, " He is not so bad as you take him to be. He will come out all right yet." They do not enjoy having persons ruin themselves—oh, no ! if there are not too many Lukes ; but let the Methodist meeting sweep all their customers away, and destroy their profits, and you will see something very different. Then they will oppose the reformation of men with all their might. Why ? Because they have an abstract objection to the reformation of men, or because they hate goodness ? Oh, no ! Because they look upon the circle of their customers purely in the light of business. It is so much money to them, and they do not want to lose their money. When you take them in their better moments ; when their benevolence, whatever there is of it, is in the ascendancy ; and when their good nature sits in judgment,—they form a very different opinion from that which they form when their avarice is awake, and they look upon men simply as instruments of their gain and profit.

So, when Paul had exorcised the evil spirit from this poor damsel, he saw in her, disenchanted, weakened, without any special end or purpose in life, one who had now a chance of faith, and reverence, and love, and obedience, and holy living, and happy dying, and immortality ; but her owners looked upon her and said, " She is good for nothing ; she is spoiled ;" and, pointing out the apostle, they said, " There is the man that spoiled her." And Paul said, " I have saved her ;" and her owners said, " You have ruined her." Paul said, " Now she is an heir of eternal riches ;" and her owners said, " She is not worth a snap." Thus differently they looked upon the same facts in the same person.

Well, it is not to be supposed that you can pluck the lamb out of the lion's jaw and have the lion thank you for it. You cannot take a victim away from a man who is making use of it for selfish purposes without waking up the man's resentment.

So these men proceeded to—what ? beat Paul ? No—oh, no. When bad men are checked, hindered, in their wrong courses, and they undertake to obtain some relief, they invariably plead the public good. When bad men in New York are arrested and stopped in their notorious business, they say, " This invasion of individual rights, if carried out, is going to ruin the foundation of our liberty." Those sharks who destroy thousands and thousands of

emigrants protest, when at last the law is framed by which they are restrained from any longer stripping these poor creatures, that it is a violation of the constitution. You will hear men, when the law lays its hand on the establishments where they are voluntarily violating public decency and virtue, all that is good and wholesome in morality, and all that is noble in patriotism, say—what? “I have a right to be wicked, I have a right to damn my soul, I have a right to be a liar, a gambler, a prize-fighter, or a grog-seller, I have a right to destroy men that want to be destroyed, I have a right to fight my dogs, I have a right to promote cock-fighting, if I please”? Oh, no! that is not what they say. They take an extra glass of drink, and talk of the interference of magistrates with the inherent rights of the people! They do not believe in such interference! And the owners of this woman were not very different from modern bad men in this respect.

“When her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market place unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews,”—

Ah! that touched the prejudice against foreigners. It was then as it was ten or fifteen years ago, when a man was brought before a mob, and it was said, “This is an abolitionist.” That was enough, in those times of excitement, and in some places, to turn the people against a man, and make them mad, and stir them up to mob him.

“They caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place unto the rulers, and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city.”

The public peace is disturbed! Excitement is produced! Dissension is awakened! Annoyance is occasioned! Tribulation on tribulation is caused!

“And teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans.”

Here was a charge of foreign intrusion and of unlawful doctrines subverting patriotism and law. The fact was, Paul had cast the devil out of the woman, and the charge was that he had brought the devil into the city, destroying all that was good and beautiful.

Men do not dare to fight under their own colors, but they make believe that they are doing so. There is talk about hypocrisy in the Church. Of course there is some hypocrisy in the Church; there is insincerity among good people; but I tell you, there are no such hypocrites in this world as are to be found among the base, the low, the vile. And these men were arrant hypocrites. They were making pretense of fostering the national good. They deemed this to be the best method of gaining their point, and at the same time

shielding themselves. These craftsmen were in danger of losing their craft, if Paul preached that there was no true God but Jehovah and Jesus. So they were bound, if possible, to put him down ; but they wanted to do it in such a way that the responsibility should not fall on them.

Of course, as these prisoners were dragged before the rulers,—the magistrates, the judges,—they said to their accusers, “ Let us hear these charges.” Of course they said to the masters of the damsel, “ Now make your allegation. Where is your proof ?” Of course they conformed, in their decision, to the law. Of course, if the prisoners were found guilty, they were punished according to the enormity of their guilt ; but if no case was made out against them, of course they let them go free. Oh, no ! not at all.

“ The multitude rose up together against them ; and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely.”

They were incarcerated, to await their trial.

Ah ! there is never a successful riot, that there is not some leader. You will never find a mob, that there is not some respectable man coiled up behind them, who sets them on.

When the Massachusetts Sixth regiment went through Baltimore, at the beginning of the great rebellion, they were pelted, stoned, clubbed, until at last patience was exhausted, and they were ordered to defend themselves. The moment they were commanded to fire, a tall Yankee, who had seen a respectable-looking man hounding the people on, and keeping himself at what he supposed to be a safe distance, stepped out of the ranks, and fired at him, instead of the poor wretches about him, and down he fell like a shot pigeon from his roost !

Now, that Yankee was a philosopher. He said to himself, “ These poor wretches are not responsible. There is the responsible man. He belongs to the respectable class, and does not mean to get hurt himself, nor to have his name and character involved in this affair. It is he that is urging forward these ignorant, degraded fellows. They are the ones that are throwing the stones, but he is the one that is to blame. Therefore, I am going to shoot, not them, but him.” It was a very characteristic thing for a Yankee soldier to do.

And that was not the whole of it. Three or four years afterward, I heard the other side of the story. I was in Baltimore lecturing, and was talking over the scenes of the rebellion in a Methodist family where I was stopping ; and the master of the house, who was a patriot, said, in the course of the conversation,

“Our church, at the beginning of the war, lost a very prominent and valuable man.” “Ah!” said I, “how was that?” “He was looking on at the passage of soldiers through the city, and was standing on the side of the crowd, and some stray shot hit him, and killed him.”

And thus, after three or four years had elapsed, I got what was lacking to make the fact complete. Here was a man, a member of the church, belonging to respectable society, but violent in his feelings, hating the North, and sympathizing with the South; and when these soldiers were marching through the city, instead of going among the boys, and taking his chance, he stood aside, and set them on, and the Yankee saw him; and when the order came to fire, he did fire, and fired to some purpose!

You will never see a riot or a mob break out, that there will not be some magistrate, some respectable man, some leader, somewhere, hounding the people on. They get the blows and bruises, as a general thing, and he shields himself, or conveys himself away, and laughs in his sleeve to think how nicely he has done it, and how little he has had the responsibility of it. It is always worth while to find out who are the real miscreants, the leaders, in such cases.

So the magistrates caused Paul and Silas to be beaten. They probably did not beat them with their own hands. They commanded others to beat them. They were cruelly beaten, untried and uncondemned, in the open market-place, where the people were assembled; and after they had been beaten, they were hustled into prison, and the jailor was ordered to put them in the innermost prison, and keep them safely. The Roman law was, that if a prisoner escaped, the keeper should suffer a penalty, of fine or death. According to directions, Paul and Silas were put into the innermost ward of the prison, and their feet were put in the stocks.

Now, a Roman prison was a most disagreeable place. There are not many prisons anywhere that are very inviting. When folks build jails and prisons, they do not generally think much about humanity. The moment a man commits a crime, people vote that he is a pest, and treat him like one. I do not think you would have to go far to find gross abuses heaped, by officers of the law, on men who are wrong-doers, to be sure, but none the less men—abuses that would have been atrocious under the most barbaric government Rome ever had. We can somewhat apologize for the prisons of that early age, when there were fewer means of reformation, if they were built rudely and strongly and only for strength,

but there is no excuse for the prisons of civilized nations at this age of the world, if they are not better. And yet, prisons, and jails, and houses of detention for witnesses, and poor-houses, are often the most hideous sores on civilization. Within a half day's travel of Brooklyn there are villages where men, for no other crime than insanity, are kept, summer and winter, almost stark naked, their food being pushed in to them through holes. They live in their own filth, and are more like wild howling beasts than like human beings. Such is the state of things on this continent, and only a few hours distant from this metropolis of civilization !

We are not to suppose that Greek and Roman prisons were worse than the worst of ours ; but they were not much better. Paul and Silas did not go up golden steps to higher seats. They were strangers, and were marked as followers of Christ, and were cruelly beaten,—suffering, doubtless, from the violence of the mob,—and were hustled to prison, and their feet were put in the stocks, and there they were.

These men might very well have chaffered with each other. Silas might have said to Paul, “ You led me into this trouble. If you had listened to me, we should have escaped all this.” And Paul might have said to Silas, “ I am not any more in fault than you are.” They might have blamed each other. Or, both of them might have said, “ If we get out of this, you won't catch us in another such scrape.” Or, they might have railed at the magistrates, or the crowd. Or, they might have sulked and said nothing. But they did neither of these things.

The darkness of night was about them. They were in a cold and dreary prison. Their feet were fastened in the stocks, and they were unable to lie down and sleep, or to comfortably sit up. But they were suffering, consciously, in a good cause. And what was their conduct ? At midnight they wakened the echoes of the prison with one of the melodies of the old Hebrew Psalms. It is said :

“ At midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God ; and the prisoners heard them.”

Sang praises ? What had they to praise God for ? You cannot put a devout and reverent man on any phase of experience, that he will not find argument for praise to God. They had not, in the old Hebrew time, any such hymns as we have now-a-days ; but Paul and Silas sang, chanted, some brave old hymns. And what must have been the sensations, the thoughts and the feelings, of those men, that they could praise God in song just after they had passed from liberty to the dungeon, and from honor to dishonor ?

Oh, I tell you, here is your bridge of gold, that has stood now many ages—the hymns of consolation that brave hearts have sung ; that have been sung by men in prisons and mountain fastnesses ; by men that had lost everything ; by men on whom had been heaped all manner of contumely ; by men under every condition of trouble and trial.

What did Paul and Silas sing ? It may be that they sang the 116th Psalm. I will read it. See if it would not sound well in any jail.

“ I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me ; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord : O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous ; yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple ; I was brought low, and he helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul ; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee. For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed, therefore have I spoken : I was greatly afflicted. I said in my haste, All men are liars. What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me ? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.”

What sentences those were to ring out from the cell of these two Hebrews, who doubtless sang them in the language of their fathers !

It is said, in simple eloquence, that “ the prisoners heard them.” That old shock-headed, red-headed fellow, who was put in for murder, and lay in the corner, more like a wolf than like a man, and had been snoring, opened his eyes, and looked around to see what disturbed him ; and, if they sang in Greek, wondered what men could find to praise God for, at midnight, in such a place as that. The various other criminals, too, looked up, and with un-
 unk amazement marveled at the singing of Paul and Silas in the
 ark and in prison.

That was a sublime spectacle. But there was something more sublime yet ; for just then a miracle took place. The foundations of the prison began to swing ; the walls began to crack and totter ; the doors sprang open ; and the men found their bonds loosed, their feet released from the stocks, and the fastenings lying around about them. There was an earthquake. What a time, what a place, that was, for men to roll out the melody of such a psalm as this !

The prisoners sat still, amazed, enchanted as it were. The jailer awoke out of a deep sleep ; and seeing how things were—seeing that all was still, that no men were in the court, that no fugitives were flying—said, “ I have been asleep, they are all gone,

and I am a dead man ;” and he drew his sword, and was about to make way with himself, when Paul (who never had so much presence of mind as when he was in extreme emergencies), called out to him, and said :

“Do thyself no harm; for we are all here.”

And the jailer *sprang in* (that is the expression), to be sure that it was so.

“Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awakening out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried, with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm; for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in.”

He glanced around, to see if those on whose keeping his very life depended were all there.

“Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas.”

Here was the keeper, abasing himself to those whom he kept. Here was the prisoner, master of the jailer. Here was the last first, and the first last.

Under those circumstances, it might be supposed that the jailer would have thanked these men, and said, “You have behaved like gentlemen, all of you;” and clapped on their chains again, and fixed them the best way he could, and bolted the door, and said, “I shan't sleep any more to-night,” and sat and watched; but many a man in a rude business has a big heart under his jacket. It is not always that we find low feelings in a rude business, and it is not always that we find elevated feelings in a refined business; and there was a streak of nobility in this jailer. When he heard the songs of these men in the prison, and saw their countenances, and thought of their fidelity to him, his mind was impressed that they were men of God; and he fell down at their feet. He had a sense of God near to him, of his own sinfulness, and of his danger.

“And he brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

He was a suppliant. The thing had gone to his conscience. He felt that he had not been living right. He had doubtless committed some crimes; but, after all, there was a foundation left in him for reformation; and his first thought was a manly, noble one,—“What shall I do to be saved?”

“And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.”

That is, they sat down and taught him who Christ was, and

why he came into the world, and how he had suffered, and wherefore he had died, and how he had been raised up by the power of God, and how he had ascended into heaven, and how he now had forgiveness of sins for all those who trusted in him and believed in his name.

“And he took them, the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.”

He was baptized, I do not care how. I do not think they sprinkled him or immersed him; but he was as really baptized as though they had sprinkled him or immersed him. I think all he had to do was to give some outward evidence that he was converted, and he did. He washed their stripes; and that was an external sign that the work of Christ was going on in his heart. So long as a man bears testimony to the grace of God in his soul, it is immaterial whether he does it in this, that, or the other way.

“And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house.”

There is a little after-scene which I always admired very much: it is such a beautiful contrast to the sweetness, and faith, and love of this great soul, Paul:

“When it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying [for it seems they had thought the matter over during the night], Let those men go. And the keeper of the prison told this, saying to Paul, The magistrates have sent to let you go; now, therefore, depart, and go in peace. But Paul said unto them, They have beat us openly, uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? may verily: but let them come themselves and fetch us out.”

He would not stir a step—brave, noble, admirable Paul! He was not one of those men whose idea of meekness was utter absence of any pride or feeling of true manhood. He had rebound in him. You could not strike him and not produce a reaction.

“The serjeants told these words unto the magistrates, and they feared when they heard that they were Romans.”

Probably the serjeants ran back, out of breath, and, coming into the presence of the magistrates, said, “Do you know what you have done? Do you know who these men are? They are *Romans*, and they say they won’t go, and that you have got to come and take them out! You had better look out for yourselves! You have been beating and imprisoning *Romans*. I would not like to be in your places.”

The magistrates were thoroughly scared; and they put on their hats quickly, and went and took them out, begging them to go.

“They came and besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city.

Oh! how great the change!

"And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen their brethren, they comforted them, and departed."

There are only three things, now, that I want to say.

First, when you trace back a narrative like this in Scripture, take pains to look at it in the light in which it actually existed. The Bible contains narratives that are of the profoundest interest, and dramatic to the last degree; and we are accustomed to read them without thinking how beautiful they are—without entering into their spirit. There are very few dramas more piquant and beautiful than many of the scenes which have been worn smooth by being told and read to us from our childhood up, so that we cease to care anything about them. It would be well for you to read your Bibles more deeply. When engravers have put the plate on the press so many times, and made so many impressions, that the surface of the steel is worn, and the lines are dull, they sometimes go over them, and deepen the lines, and sharpen the edges; and then the impressions are nearly as good as those which were struck off when the plate was new. Now, the Bible wants sharpening, so to speak, that the impressions which it makes upon our minds may be stronger; and this sharpening is to be effected by the care with which we read its pages.

I have one word to say in regard to the triumph of these men in the midst of their adversities. Let no man who is in trouble despond. Let no man who seems overthrown, in any way, give up his hope, and feel that he is abandoned of God. Let no men who are beaten by the mob, and hustled by the magistrates into prison, with manacles on their hands, and their feet in the stocks, forget to pray, and sing praises to God. There is a great remedy for those who are cast down. He who rests his soul upon God, no matter how dark the sky, no matter how severe the storm may be, shall be saved. No man shall be lost who puts his trust in the power of God and the love of Christ.

Finally, let me say a word in respect to the jailer. When men have been living a godless life, and they hear the truth as it is in Jesus, it is time for them to act. The moment when it is first made known to them, they should fashion their life in accordance with it.

If there are those who have come into this house to-night, godless men, far from living right, knowing that they ought to live differently; if anything in the teachings of God's Word has stirred their conscience in them; if they have been awakened to the feeling that their lives ought to be reformed, now is the time for them to begin to change their course. The jailer, when he saw the work of God in the deliverance of his servants, came in, trembling, fell

down before them, and said, "What shall I do to be saved;" and when the spirit of God touches your conscience and feelings, your first question should be, "What shall I do?" This question ought to come from your lips or heart as quick as the ball from a rifle. A man does not need to take six months and go through all the stages of conviction into Christianity. A man does not need, under such circumstances, to take an hour to ponder. How long does it take a man, when he sees the building in which he lives on fire, to decide to jump? How long does it take a man, when he sees a deadly serpent coiled up near him, to make up his mind to get out of its way, or to kill it? How long does it take a man, when he sees the walls or timbers of a building tottering, and threatening to fall on him, to conclude that he had better take himself out of danger?

You are living in peril. Your souls are in danger. You have been going on thoughtlessly, and wickedly hardening your hearts; the voice of God has called often to you; and well might you cry, "What shall I do to be saved?" To every one who asks that question in sincerity and earnestness, I say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house with thee." If you would be saved, take Christ as the man of your counsel—as your best friend. Christ teaches you how to live. Say, to-night, "I will live as Christ bids me. I will cut off everything that is contrary to the commands of Christ. I will enlist under his banner."

When a man says, "I will enlist," what does he mean? Is it as if he said, "I know all about military tactics"? No; it is as if he said, "I will do, as fast as I can, what is told me." When a man turns to the Lord Jesus Christ, he does that which is equivalent to saying, "I will take thee for my Master; I will believe on thee; I will endeavor to do thy will; I will yield implicit allegiance to thee."

Now, you can do that to-night; you can do it before you leave this house; and every true man ought to do it, and will do it if he acts according to the inspirations of the highest elements of the human soul, and for his present good, and his eternal salvation.

Let every man, therefore, in whose heart arises, in the faintest degree, the question, "What shall I do to be saved?" listen to the teaching of wisdom. Do not evade your duty in the matter by saying, "I must think about it." Do not hesitate, and say, "I will go and talk with my friends." Keep asking, "What shall I do to be saved?" Do not rest till it is answered. Settle it now. Say, "I believe in my father's and mother's God; and by the help of

God, I swear, before the Highest, that from this hour I will follow the precepts of Christ, according to the strength given me, with all my might, to the end of my life."

Take hold of Christ ; enlist in his army ; and then, every day, do your duty like men ; and you will be Christians.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU ever-blessed One, we cannot behold thee with the outward senses. We draw near to thee led by thine inspiration. Thou art drawing our affections toward thee. Our needs all call out for God. Our souls pant for him, as the hart for the water-brooks. We rejoice that it is not in vain to come, and that those who have most often sought thee are sure of the bounty of thy mercy ; are sure of thine existence ; are sure that thou art, and that thou art the rewarder of those who diligently seek thee. We thank thee that thou hast made it easy to come to thee. Thou art not clothed with terror. Thou art most merciful toward those who repent of their sins, and seek to do better. Thou art gracious to those who are bowed down with infirmity. Thou lendest thy strength freely ; and by thy wisdom, by the inspiration of thy Spirit, our minds work, and we discern good from evil, and seek, along the way of righteousness, to fulfill all thy decrees.

Now, Lord, we pray that we may be strengthened to the duties that remain to us. Thou hast granted unto us many years, and we have seen great good. Thou hast fulfilled thy promises ; and afflictions which have come in overmeasure, at times, have been sanctified by thy goodness ; and thou art still a prayer-hearing God. Thou art still ready to support those who put their trust in thee ; to forgive those who heartily repent of sin ; and to lead those who seek divine light.

We pray, this evening, that every heart may be turned toward thee, and that each one, according to his several need, may find God present to hear and help. Make every one feel that thou art speaking his name—calling him. We pray that there may be individuals coming to thee heart by heart, soul by soul ; and that each one who is in any necessity may bring all that is in him, that the eye of God may see and understand.

We beseech of thee, O Lord, that thou wilt accept our thanks that so many have been brought to a knowledge of Christ ; that so many are seeking to walk in the spirit of the Master ; and that thy Spirit is in them, leading them to turn again and give to others as they have received. We pray that the same mercifulness that is in thee may be in us ; and that the same bountifulness that is in thee may be in us. We desire to do good as we have opportunity.

Bless, we pray thee, those who are in our schools and missions, working in all the ways where human sorrows are. Clothe them with strength, and give them comfort in their work. And while they work, wherever thou mayest call them to labor, grant that the interpretation of their work may be more and more perfect in their experience. Not only may they perform the duties which are enjoined in thy word, but may the truths of that word be interpreted in their own living consciousness.

We pray that thou wilt grant thy blessing to rest upon all the churches of this city and of the great city that is near us, and upon all the churches

of our land. We thank thee that we have so many who speak in thy name; so many that are pilgrims, seeking to walk the journey of faith. We pray that the number may be multiplied. May all the destitute places be filled with churches. May sanctuaries of God be built up throughout the whole country, that thy kingdom may bring with it justice, pure administration, intelligence, and more and more peacefulness among the people. And may this nation rise, not in outward strength alone, but in the strength of God. May it not stand and brutally beat down the weak. May it not be a nation of armed warriors. May its banner be love; and may its mission be peace among the nations; and may its example win men to liberty, to virtue, and to prosperity.

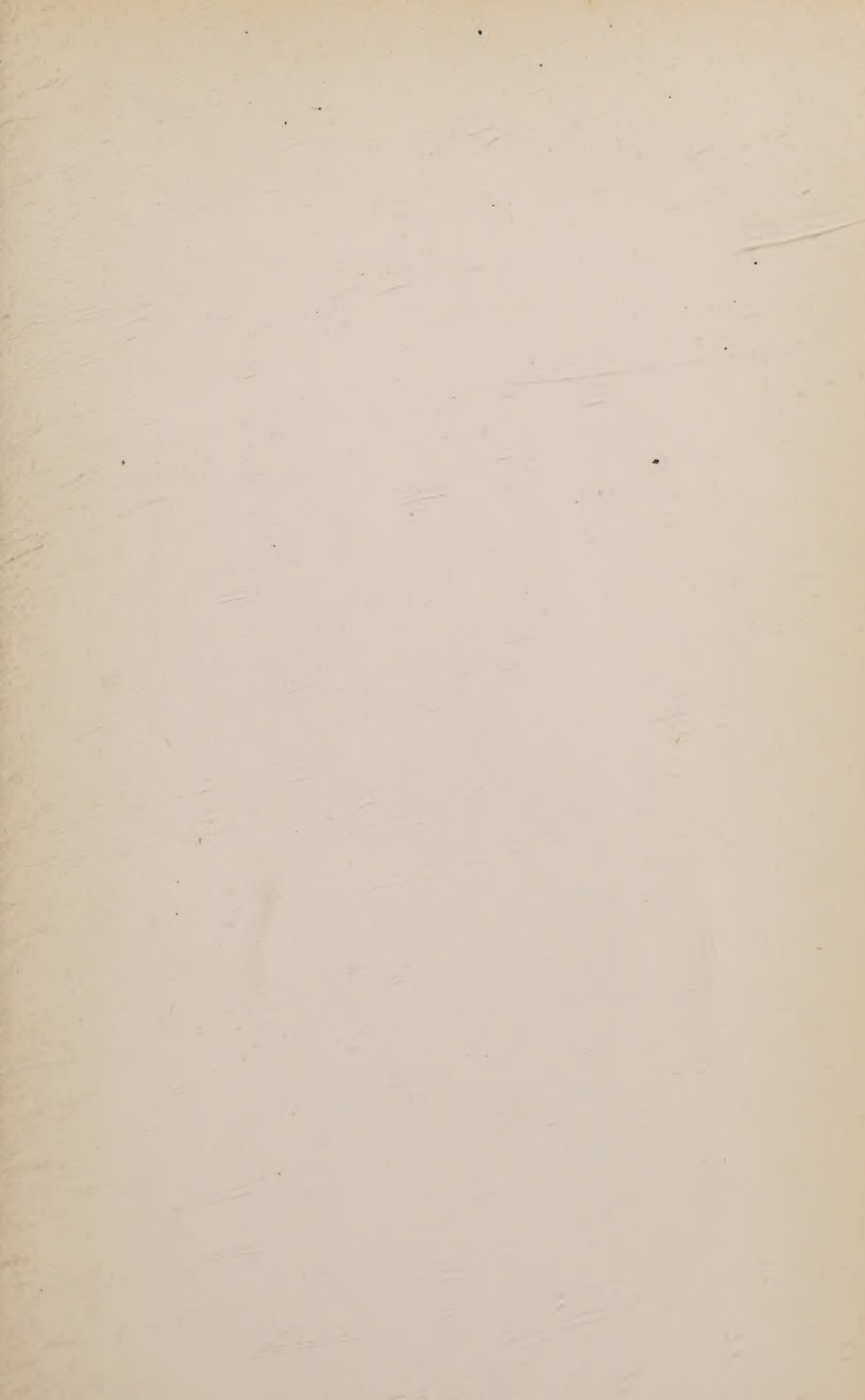
May thy kingdom come in all the world. We pray that the time of evil, and of selfishness, and of pride, and of war, and of superstition, and of ignorance, may pass away; and may thy nature and thy laws be more and more perfectly revealed, until the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of thee.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech thee to bless the word spoken. Grant that it may not be in vain. Bringing back the pictures of the olden time, may we find in them much to interpret the present. May we find in them many things to wean us from evil, and inspire us to good. Give us thy blessing as we sing once more. Go with us to our homes. Keep us this night, this week, all the days of our lives. Do exceeding abundantly for us more than we can ask or think. We ask it through riches of grace in Christ Jesus. *Amen.*





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